Illman & Sons

SWARTHMORE HALL.

The Residence of George Fox.

THE LIFE

OF

GEORGE FOX;

WITH

DISSERTATIONS ON HIS VIEWS

CONCERNING

THE DOCTRINES, TESTIMONIES, AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY

SAMUEL M. JANNEY,

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM PENN.

"If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye."—1 PETER iii. 14.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."—DANIEL xii. 3.

COPYRIGHT Nov. 1. 1853

PHILADELPHIA:
LIPPINCOTT, GRAMBO & CO.
1853.

BX7795
.F7J3

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853, by

SAMUEL M. JANNEY,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern District of Virginia.

STEREOTYPED BY J. FAGAN. PRINTED BY T. K. AND P. G. COLLINS.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Protestant Reformation—State of society in England in the middle of the 17th century..... 17

CHAPTER II.

Birth and parentage—Serious deportment—Withdraws from company—Temptations—Goes to London—State of Society there—Returns to Drayton, visits Priests and professors of religion—His distress of mind—Religious exercises—Travels into Derbyshire, Leicestershire, and Nottinghamshire—Elizabeth Hooton convinced—George Fox appears in the gospel ministry. 1624–48 30

CHAPTER III.

His views on gospel ministry—On lawyers, physicians and priests—On understanding the Scripture—He goes into the "steeple-house" at Nottingham—The "more sure word of prophecy"—He is cast into prison—Taken to the Sheriff's house—Again in jail—Released and travels in the ministry—Is beaten and abused at Mansfield—Reproves the Ranters at Coventry—Meets with Priest Stevens—Prays for a sick man, who is healed—Attends a meeting at Derby—Is examined and committed to prison. 1648–50..... 45

CHAPTER IV.

Preaching of George Fox in steeple-houses considered—His letter to Colonel Barton—To the Mayor of Derby concerning oaths—Conversation on perfection—The jailer convinced—Epistle of George Fox to Friends—Is visited by his relations—Refuses to give bond for good behaviour—Abused by the magistrates, and remanded to prison—His letter to the justice and to the priests—A trooper convinced—George Fox refuses a captaincy—Is put in jail among the felons—Letter to the judges on the penal laws—Epistle to Friends. 1650–1..... 60

CHAPTER V.

Release from prison—Visits Litchfield—Passes through Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire—Convincement of R. Farnsworth—J. Nayler and W. Dewsbury—Preaches at Beverly—Visits Justice Hotham—Consternation of a priest—Visits York minster—Rudely treated—At Cleaveland meets with Ranters—Meeting at Malton—At Pickering—A clergyman convinced, who travels with him—Passes through Patrington—Is apprehended—Searched by a Justice and set at liberty—Forgives his persecutors—Ascends Pendle-hill—A vision—Convincement of many in the Dales of Yorkshire. 1651..... 76

CHAPTER VI.

Meeting at Firbank chapel — Convincement of Francis Howgill, J. Camm, John and Ann Audland—Meetings at Kendal and Underburrow—Convincement of E. Burrough—Swarthmore—Convincement of Margaret Fell and family, among whom were Thomas Salthouse, Wm. Caton, and Ann Clayton. 1652..... 89

CHAPTER VII.

Able coadjutors of George Fox—Several clergymen convinced—The clergy instigate persecution—At Ulverstone George Fox is abused by the people—His wonderful recovery—His conversation with a soldier—He and James Nayler cruelly beaten at Walney—Judge Fell issues warrants to apprehend the rioters—Magnanimity of George Fox—At Lancaster assizes he contends with the priest—Is victorious—Epistle of George Fox. 1652..... 102

CHAPTER VIII.

Prediction concerning the Long Parliament—Views on Prophecy and Miracles—Convincement of A. Pearson—Letter from him—Journey to Cumberland—Controversy with a Priest—Meetings at Cockermouth, Bingham, and Carlisle—Imprisonment of Geo. Fox at Carlisle—Is beaten by the Jailer—Sings while beaten—Challenge to his persecutors—Cromwell's Parliament—Liberation of George Fox—Convincement of J. Parnel and John Stubbs—Ministry of John Stubbs and S. Fisher—Their visit to Rome—George Fox on Perfection—His account of Friends' prosperity—Convincement of George Whitehead and John Burnyeat. 1653 114

CHAPTER IX.

George Fox leaves Swarthmore—At Drayton meets N. Stevens—Controversy with him—Arrested by Col. Hacker and taken to

London—Interview with Cromwell—Great meetings in London—Settlement of Friends' meetings in the city—Letter from A. Pearson—Second visit to Whitehall—Cromwell's news-monger—His triers of the clergy — George Fox travels in Kent and Sussex—Visits J. Parnel—Sketch of his life and death. 1654..... 131

CHAPTER X.

Cromwell's pretensions examined — Milton on religious liberty — One thousand Friends in prison—Hostility of the clergy and magistrates, and indifference of the Protector — George Fox revisits Drayton —Proceeds to Warwickshire — Is visited by W. Edmundson—Sketch of W. Edmundson's life—George Fox visits a sick woman among the Baptists — Returns to London — Meets with J. Nayler—Travels in several counties, escorted by a captain—Sends an address to Land's-End—Arrested by Major Ceely and sent to Lanceston jail—Meets General Desborough—Trial before Judge Glyn—Offence of the hat—Paper on swearing—Major Ceely's malice—Defence of George Fox—He is remanded to prison. 1655-6..... 144

CHAPTER XI.

State Prisons—George Fox in Doomsdale—He is released—Goes to Exeter, and meets with J. Nayler—Delusion of Nayler—His trial and punishment—His restoration and death—His dying expressions — George Fox attends meetings at Bristol in an orchard—Returns to London—Has two interviews with Cromwell—Travels in most parts of the nation—Great numbers of Friends in prison—George Fox's letters to Friends —General meetings of Friends. 1656..... 159

CHAPTER XII.

Visit to Wales—Meets with John Ap-John, and Thomas Holmes—Tumult at Brecknock — Meetings in Wales — Returns to Chester —Cromwell's proclamation for a fast — George Fox again in Wales —Great meetings and remarkable sermon — Controversy with a priest—Dispute with a governor—John Ap-John imprisoned and released—Vision of George Fox—Return to Liverpool —To Manchester — To Swarthmore — Attends a General Meeting —Large meeting at Langlands — J. Wilkinson convinced—Epistle to Friends concerning blacks and Indian slaves. 1657..... 174

CHAPTER XIII.

Visit to Scotland—Opposes the Calvinistic Doctrines—The curses of the clergy—Visits Leith—Edinburgh—Summoned before the Council—Ordered to leave the nation—Goes to Glasgow—Stirling—Perth—Rudely treated — Returns to Edinburgh — Leaves Scotland — Comes to New Castle—Durham—Attends a Yearly Meeting in Bedfordshire — Advice to Ministers — Convincement of Isaac and Mary Penington — George Fox disputes with a Jesuit. 1657–8..... 187

CHAPTER XIV.

Interview with Cromwell, and letter to him—Letter to Lady Claypole—To the Protector, on persecution—Sufferings of Friends—Letter to Parliament—Last interview with Cromwell—Death of the Protector — His character — Independents' declaration, and George Fox's answer — Illness of George Fox at Reading — His epistle to Friends against war—Richard Cromwell — Changes of government—General Monk — Commotion in London — George Fox visits the west of England — Meeting in the orchard at Bristol. 1658–9..... 204

CHAPTER XV.

Restoration and promises of Charles II.—Wickedness in London—Letter of R. Hubberthorn — George Fox attends general meetings at Balby and Skipton — He is arrested at Swarthmore and committed to Lancaster jail — M. Fell applies to the King — George Fox's letter to the King—Book called the "Battledoor"—George Fox's examination in London — Released by the King's order — Seven hundred Friends released from prison — Fifth-monarchy insurrection—Persecution of Friends—Four thousand in prison — Declaration presented to the King—He orders the liberation of Friends — Execution of the Regicides — George Fox and the Jesuits — Account of the martyrdom of Friends in Boston — Deputies of Massachusetts in London — Their interview with George Fox—Union of Church and State in Massachusetts the cause of persecution. 1660–1..... 219

CHAPTER XVI.

Preaching of Friends in foreign lands—Funds raised—George Fox proposes a colony in America — Letter of Josiah Cole — George Fox's conversation with a Papist—Marriages of Friends—Their

sufferings—Address to the king—George Fox the younger—Letter of T. Sherman to George Fox — Travels of George Fox in the country — Seized by Lord Beaumont, and sent to Leicester jail — His trial and liberation — Death of Edward Burrough and Richard Hubberthorn — Travels of George Fox. 1661–3..... 234

CHAPTER XVII.

Visits Colonel Kirby—Is apprehended—His examination by the Justices—His trial at the Quarter Sessions—Committed to Lancaster prison—Sufferings of Friends—Margaret Fell committed to prison at Lancaster—Her trial before Judge Twisden—Trial of George Fox—He is remanded to prison. 1663–4..... 248

CHAPTER XVIII.

George Fox and M. Fell continue in Lancaster Castle—Sufferings of prisoners—They are again brought before the Judges—Their trial and sentence pronounced—They are remanded to prison—A vision of George Fox. 1664–5..... 264

CHAPTER XIX.

Conventicle act — Sufferings and banishment of Friends — Plague in London—G. Whitehead and Gilbert Latey remain to nurse the sick—Sufferings at Reading—Letter of George Fox to the prisoners — Removal of George Fox to Scarborough castle — His sufferings there — His conversation with Papists — With Dr. Witty—With Dr. Craddock—His release. 1665–6..... 281

CHAPTER XX.

Great Fire in London — Thomas Ibbitt's prophecy — Travels of George Fox — He reproves the followers of J. Perrot — Recommends meetings for discipline throughout the Society—Meetings of Dissenters prohibited by proclamation—Conduct of Presbyterian clergy—George Fox visits Esquire Marsh—Conversation with a Papist—Visits Scarborough—Travels in Ireland—Returns to England—His marriage with Margaret Fell. 1666–9..... 296

CHAPTER XXI.

George Fox on the Education of Orphans—M. Fox imprisoned—Letter of George Fox to her — Renewal of Conventicle Act — Sufferings of Friends — George Fox's Visit to the Prisoners — His Travels — His sufferings in Spirit — His View of the New

Jerusalem — His Prayers — His Wife, being released, comes to London—George Fox and others embark for Barbadoes—Chased by a Pirate — Remarkably preserved — Meeting in Barbadoes—Rules of Discipline—Advice to Slaveholders—Letter to Governor of Barbadoes—Visit to Jamaica—Death of Elizabeth Hooten—Voyage of George Fox to Maryland. 1669–72..... 311

CHAPTER XXII.

His kind reception in Maryland—J. Burnyeat—General Meetings at West River and Cliffs—Eastern Shore—Meeting with Indians—Journey to New Jersey — Long Island — Rhode Island—Yearly Meeting—Shelter Island—Meets William Edmundson—Returns through New Jersey, Newcastle, Third-Haven — Sails for Virginia—Travels to Carolina—Meetings with Whites and Indians—Travels in Virginia—Establishes Meetings for Discipline—Disorders produced in Virginia by J. Perrot—George Fox returns to Maryland—Sails for England—Arrives at Bristol, and meets his wife—Declaration of indulgence, and liberation of four hundred Friends—Travels to London—Goes with his wife to visit William Penn at Rickmansworth. 1672–3..... 327

CHAPTER XXIII.

Arrested and committed to Worcester Jail—T. Lower remains with him—Examination at the Sessions—Taken to London—Appears before the Court of King's Bench — Sent back to Worcester—Conversation with a Priest—Doctrine of Perfection—Trial at the Quarter Sessions —Permitted to Travel—Attends Yearly Meeting — Second Trial at Worcester — Premunired — Sickness in Prison — Pardon offered, and declined — Letter from William Penn — Trial at London before Judge Hale — Released from Prison. 1673–5..... 342

CHAPTER XXIV.

Residence of George Fox at Swarthmore — Epistle to Friends — Separation of Wilkinson and Story — Charges against them — George Fox resumes his travels—Letter to his wife—Testimony against tithes — Yearly meeting of London — Visit to William Penn — Answer to Roger Williams — Account of Robert Barclay—Visit to Holland — Yearly meeting of Amsterdam — Princess Elizabeth Palatine—Letter to Friends in Dantzic—Return to England. 1675–7..... 358

CHAPTER XXV.

George Fox meets the adherents of Wilkinson and Story — Visits Isaac Penington — Death of Isaac Penington — Yearly Meeting, 1678 — Letter of George Fox to his wife — Letter to Friends against schism — Return to Swarthmore — Epistle to Friends — Yearly meeting, 1680—Visit to Friends' schools—Sufferings and constancy of Friends — George Fox prosecuted for tithes at Swarthmore—Advice on choosing sheriffs—Disturbance at Gracechurch street meeting — At Devonshire house, &c. — Yearly Meetings, 1683 '4 — Redemption of Algerine captives — Visit to Holland. 1677–84..... 370

CHAPTER XXVI.

Occupation in London—Yearly Meeting, 1685—Death of Charles II. — Accession of James II. — Liberation of 1300 Friends — Yearly Meeting, 1686 — Epistle of George Fox to Friends — His Gift of a Meeting-House — King's Declaration of Indulgence—George Fox on Prayer — On the Way to the Kingdom — On Heaven—Accession of William and Mary—Act of Toleration—Yearly Meeting, 1690 — Epistle to Friends — Death of George Fox—Death of Margaret Fox. 1684–91..... 386

CHAPTER XXVII.

Personal appearance—Dress—Property — Character — Ministry—The early Friends—Statistics of the Society—Conclusion..... 404

A Dissertation on the Views of George Fox concerning the Doctrines of the Christian Church..... 415

A Dissertation on the Views of George Fox concerning Christian Testimonies..... 451

A Dissertation on the Views of George Fox concerning Christian Discipline..... 479

PREFACE.

THE life of GEORGE FOX is a subject of interest, not only to the devout Christian, but to the student of general history. To the former, he appears as an instructive example of the inward or spiritual life; to the latter, as one of the most efficient instruments in the cause of religious and civil liberty.

The signal changes which have been wrought during the last two centuries, in the opinions, laws, and institutions of Christendom, are to be attributed less to the labours of enlightened statesmen and jurists, than to the teaching and example of those religious reformers who became the instruments in the Divine hand to dispel the clouds of superstition, and shake the foundations of despotism both in church and state. Among these, the subject of this work is entitled to hold a conspicuous rank. It was remarked of him by a distinguished American statesman,* that "George Fox alone has, without human learning, done more towards the restoration of real, primitive, unadulterated Christianity, and the extirpation of priestcraft, superstition, and ridiculous, unavailing rites and ceremonies, than any other reformer in Protestant Christendom has with it."

In offering to the public this biography of that great and good man, I would by no means discourage the perusal of his excellent Journal, of which it has been said by Sir James Mackintosh, that

---

* Gov. Livingston. See Am. Museum, VIII. 255, December, 1790.

"it is one of the most extraordinary and instructive narratives in the world, which no reader of competent judgment can peruse without revering the virtue of the writer."

Although the Journal, and other works of George Fox, have furnished a large proportion of the matter contained in this volume, I have, by diligent research, been enabled to enrich my narrative with facts and anecdotes from many other writings of the early Friends, some of which are now exceedingly rare.

My design has been to relate the most important and interesting incidents in his life; to interweave with my narrative the biography of his wife, MARGARET FOX; to introduce sketches of his most prominent coadjutors; to give a succinct history of the Society of Friends during that period; to connect it with the general history of the times; and to furnish an instructive work, that may gain the attention of readers generally. How far this design has been accomplished, the public can best determine.

In the Dissertations at the close of the volume, great pains have been taken to give a clear and impartial statement of the views of George Fox concerning the important subjects embraced in them; and, in relation to controverted points, copious selections from his works are introduced, to enable the reader to judge for himself.

S. M. JANNEY.

Near Purcelville, Loudon County, Va.,
10th month 20th, 1853.

LIFE OF GEORGE FOX.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Protestant Reformation—State of society in England in the middle of the 17th century.

In no other part of Europe has the Protestant Reformation been so effectual in promoting civil and religious liberty as in Great Britain. Its progress, however, was slow in its earliest stage, being subjected to the caprice of a despotic monarch, fettered by the influence of a powerful priesthood, and opposed by the prejudices of an ignorant people.

All great changes in the opinions and habits of mankind must necessarily be gradual, and in no respect are men more tenacious of their views and feelings than in relation to the momentous concerns of religion. The doctrines that have come down to us from our fathers, and the religious ceremonies we have been engaged in from our youth, are associated in our minds with all that is dear and all that is venerable; with the tender ties of parental affection, and the reverence due to an Almighty Creator.

It is difficult to estimate,—perhaps impossible for us to appreciate,—the mental conflicts which must have agitated those mighty minds that first ventured to question the truth of doctrines implicitly believed for many generations, to point out the inefficiency of time-honoured observances, and to attack the abuses of a hierarchy whose power was authoritative throughout Europe, and had been accumulating by the usurpations of a thousand years.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Pontifical chair was occupied by Alexander VI., who has been called the Nero of the papal throne. A more odious compound of vice and hypocrisy has seldom been exhibited before the world; and his son, Cæsar Borgia, whom he promoted to a high office in the church, was not less noted for his profligate morals and vindictive temper, which rendered him a terror to the Roman people.

It is remarked by the learned historian of the Popes, that "there was but one spot in the world where such deeds were possible; that spot alone, where unlimited temporal power and the highest spiritual authority were united in the same individual." *

Never was any court more corrupt than that of the Vatican. It had become a regular system with nearly all the Popes, to enrich their relatives from the public revenues, and some of them established their children and nephews in princely estates.

All offices, civil and ecclesiastical, were exposed to sale; many new offices, with exorbitant fees attached, were created for the express purpose of being sold; † and, indeed, every expedient that could be devised by a cunning and mercenary priesthood, was adopted to raise money for purposes of luxury and ambition.

Among the most lucrative of these priestly inventions was the sale of indulgences, by which the purchasers were exempted

* Ranké's Hist. of the Popes, 31. † Ibid, 130.

from penance, and assured of forgiveness for their crimes. Alexander VI. was the first to declare officially that they released sinners from purgatory.*

After his death, and the short reign of the warlike Julius II., John de Medici succeeded to the Pontificate under the title of Leo X. His munificent patronage of learning and the fine arts, his lavish expenditure for the adorning of his capital, and his prodigality in maintaining the splendour of his court, impoverished the papal treasury and induced him to push the sale of indulgences to a shameful and ruinous extent.

In Italy, the revival of ancient learning which had recently taken place, was attended with scepticism throughout the ranks of the learned; while infidelity and open profanity prevailed among the priesthood, and the populace were sunk to the lowest depths of licentiousness.

In Germany, there were, among the scholars, some earnest and devout souls; and among the lower classes, where superstition most prevailed, there were many whose minds had been partially enlightened by the preaching of the various dissenting sects.

The doctrines and sufferings of the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Bohemian Brethren, the Lollards, and Wickliffites, had sown the seeds of reformation throughout Europe, and now the fields were white already to the harvest.

It was, however, ordered by Divine Providence that the torch which was destined to set Europe in a blaze of religious controversy, should first be lighted in the cloisters of a monastery.

Martin Luther was a monk in a convent at Erfurth, belonging to the order called "The Hermits of St. Augustine." He had devoted himself to a monastic life from a sense of duty, hoping to find in the solitude of the cloister an exemption from temptation and a release from the burden of sin. It was in vain, however, that he resorted to austerities of human invention, to watchings, fastings, maceration of the body, and ceremonial observances. A sense of sin still

* Ranké's Hist. of the Popes, 33.

oppressed him, and the suggestions of evil were not repressed in his bosom. His body was worn almost to a skeleton, his mind oppressed with sadness, and he thought only of the terrors inspired by a lively apprehension of divine justice.

While in this state of despondency, he was visited by Staupitz, vicar-general of his order, a man of tender feelings and religious experience. He sympathised deeply with the afflicted monk, advised him to study the Scriptures, and gave him, what he never before possessed, a copy of the Bible, which he prized as an inestimable treasure. From this time forward the sacred volume became his constant companion, and the Epistles of Paul were his favourite subjects of study.

There was one text which especially claimed his attention, "The just shall live by faith."

This doctrine afforded peace to his agitated mind. He came gradually to see that the works in which he had been engaged had no saving efficiency,—that the remission of sins cannot be purchased by money, nor obtained by penance; but is the free gift of God through Christ.

The talents, learning, and piety of Luther recommended him to the Duke of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, who appointed him a Professor of Theology in the University of Wittemburg.

It was here that the Reformation began, in the year 1517, by the publication of his thesis against indulgences. Without intending to attack the Roman see, he at first aimed only at the abuses of the church, but he soon found that these abuses were interwoven with its whole structure. His censures were resented as presumptuous, his opinions condemned as heretical, and a bull of excommunication was issued against him, by which he was declared an obstinate heretic, and the secular arm invoked for his destruction. But a fire had been kindled which could not be extinguished. It spread from heart to heart, and from kingdom to kingdom, until the whole of Europe was involved in a fierce conflict of religious controversy.

The outworks of the church,—its superstitious observ-

ances,—had been assailed by other reformers, and they perished in the attempt; Luther attacked the citadel, and it shook to its foundations. The Roman hierarchy claimed to be the depository of divine truth, and the Pope pretended to hold the keys of St. Peter. Luther appealed to the sacred scriptures as the standard of christian doctrines, and claimed the right of every man to read them in his vernacular tongue. Justification by works was a prominent doctrine of the papacy, and the source of its greatest revenues; justification by faith in Christ alone was the fundamental principle of the Protestant reformers.

The seeds of the Reformation had been sown in England by John Wickliffe, who lived a hundred and fifty years before the time of Luther. He was the first to translate the New Testament into the English language, a service of inestimable value to the cause of truth; but his version must have had a limited circulation, as the art of printing was then unknown.

Wickliffe's views were far in advance of the age, and even clearer, in some respects, than those afterwards advanced by Luther. He denied the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope, as well as the doctrine of transubstantiation. He maintained that prescribed forms of prayer are contrary to christian liberty, that sins are not abolished by water baptism, without the baptism of the Spirit, that those are presumptuous who affirm that infants are not saved who die without baptism, and that wise men should leave that as impertinent which is not plainly expressed in scripture.* His doctrines were condemned, his books burnt, and himself imprisoned, by order of a Council of Bishops in 1382; but owing to the dissensions at Rome, where two anti-popes were then at war with each other, he was released and suffered to live in peace.

"He wrote near two hundred volumes, all which were called in, condemned and ordered to be burned, *together with his bones*, by order of the Council of Constance, in the year 1425, forty-one years after his death." †

* Neal's Hist. Puritans, I. 29 30. † Ibid. I. 30.

His followers became very numerous after his decease, and suffered much persecution at the instance of the clergy. It is asserted by Knighton, a contemporary historian, that more than half the people of England embraced his doctrines.* They were sometimes called Lollards from their supposed resemblance to a German sect of that name.

It is said they continued to be numerous at the time of the Reformation, and some historians assert that the Anabaptists in England sprang from the Wickliffites.

It is well known to all readers of history, that the rupture between the Roman hierarchy and the Anglican church was occasioned by the Pope's refusal to grant a divorce to Henry VIII. It was a quarrel in which both the Pontiff and the King, under pretence of religious scruples, displayed the most discreditable passions; — prevarication on one side, being no less conspicuous, than profligacy on the other. It was, however, through the overruling of Divine providence, made instrumental to the promotion of the Reformation, by giving a fatal blow to the papal supremacy in England.

The form of church government established by Henry, of which he made himself the head, was but slightly removed from that of Rome. The persecution of Dissenters still continued, but the ecclesiastical courts, those terrible engines of oppression, were somewhat restrained and made subservient to the civil power.

An English version of the scriptures, by Tyndale was printed at Antwerp in 1526, and afterwards in Hamburg, which being introduced into England was sought for by the people and read with great avidity. The bishops being dissatisfied with it, the king called it in by proclamation, and another edition was printed in England under the supervision of Archbishop Cranmer. In the latter part of his reign the king leaned more towards the papal doctrines and ceremonies: he even prohibited the reading of the New Testament in English "by

* Neal, II. 354.

women, artificers, apprentices, journeymen, serving-men and labourers."*

During the reign of Edward VI. the Reformation made some progress, but after his death it was arrested by the bigoted Mary, who restored the Catholic priests, and lighted again the fires of persecution. After the short and troubled reign of Mary, her sister Elizabeth occupied the throne with signal ability. She restored the Protestant religion, but being fond of pompous ceremonies, she imposed upon the English clergy some vestments and observances, borrowed from the Roman ritual, which gave much dissatisfaction.

Those among the clergy who objected to these relics of popery, being men of severe morals, acquired the appellation of Puritans. They were generally Calvinists in their doctrines, and members of the established church, but, by the severity of the Bishops, many of them were driven from her communion.

The court reformers in the reign of Elizabeth admitted that the Church of Rome was a true church, though corrupt in some points of doctrine and government, and that the Pope was a true bishop. These concessions they thought necessary because the English bishops pretended to derive their authority by *succession* from the Apostles, through the Romish church. The Puritans, on the contrary, affirmed the Pope to be Antichrist, and the church of Rome utterly apostate. They not only renounced her communion, but disclaimed the validity of ordination by succession.

The most prominent and renowned among the reformers, both in Great Britain and on the continent, adhered to the popish idea of entire uniformity in doctrine and worship; an attainment which is not necessary, neither is it possible without violating the principle of religious liberty. Another idea, equally erroneous, which they brought with them from the Church of Rome, was the establishment and endowment of a national religion — a union of church and state.

---

*Neal's Hist. Puritans, I. 42.

These views appear to have been held by nearly all the German, Swiss, English, and Scotch reformers, and each party among them, when it attained to power, used the secular arm to coerce the consciences of men. Uniformity was the rock on which the reformers split.* To attain this fancied good, they repressed the feelings of Christian charity, quenched the spirit of Divine grace within them, and for a mere difference in religious opinions or forms of worship, inflicted fines, imprisonment, and death. Some of the clergy who held these persecuting tenets, were prevented by feelings of humanity from carrying them into practice; others were sincere bigots, who thought to do God service by persecuting and defaming those whom they considered heretics; but we have reason to believe that a much larger number were worldly-minded men, who embraced their profession from sordid or ambitious motives. These were the supple tools of power, and readily acquiesced in all the changes of the English hierarchy.

When the Protestant religion was restored by Elizabeth, "most of the inferior beneficed clergy kept their places, as they had done through all the changes of the three last reigns, and without all question if the queen had died, and the old religion had been restored, they would have turned again; but the bishops and some of the dignified clergy, having sworn to the supremacy under King Henry, and renounced it again under Queen Mary, thought it might reflect a dishonour upon their character to change again, and therefore, they resolved to hold together, and by their weight endeavour to distress the reformation. Upon so great an alteration of religion, the number of recusants out of 9400 parochial benefices was inconsiderable." "Not above two hundred and forty three clergymen quitted their livings."†

The Puritans, who had been restrained with a strong hand during the long reign of Elizabeth, hoped on the accession of James I. to enjoy favour and protection; as that monarch

* Neal. I. 75. † Ibid. I. 82.

had been educated in principles similar to their own. They were, however, disappointed, for the weak and pedantic king was soon gained over by the prelates of the established church, who flattered his vanity and instilled into his mind that well-known maxim of priestly invention, "no bishop no king."* Notwithstanding the rigorous execution of the penal statutes against non-conformity, the Puritans continued to increase more rapidly. This may be attributed in part to the industry of their preachers, and to the greater purity of their morals, when contrasted with the clergy of the established church.

The Puritans, moreover, gained credit and favour in the country by opposing the despotic maxims in relation to government, put forth by the king and supported by the bishops.

Charles I., though far superior in intellect to his father, inherited from him those maxims of despotism, which, being obstinately adhered to, cost him his crown and his life. On his accession, the Puritans were already numerous and influential;—they were the staunch advocates of the constitution, and when the king pushed his prerogative to such an extent as to endanger the liberties of the people, they contended for the rights of Parliament until a civil war ensued, which convulsed the whole kingdom.

Seldom has there been a conflict which stirred so deeply the passions of men,—for the interests of religion, no less than the civil liberties of the people, were supposed to be at stake.

On the side of the king, were arrayed the dignitaries of the church, the heads of universities, and the most powerful of the nobility. They based their pretensions on the long established usages of the realm, the apostolic succession of the bishops, and the divine right of kings.

On the side of the parliament was found the great body of Protestant nonconformists; composed of various sects, but all agreeing in their love of civil liberty, and their antipathy

* Neal, I. 219.

to the established church. Among their leaders were men of great learning and commanding talents: grave in deportment, deliberate in counsel, prompt and energetic in action. Religion appeared to be the ruling principle of their lives: not the religion of the New Testament, lamb-like and peaceful, but rather that fiery zeal which animated the judges and avengers of Israel. They applied to themselves the commands and promises of the Old Testament, and branded their adversaries with epithets directed by the inspired penmen against heathen idolatry. Their zeal was stimulated by their ministers, who maintained that they fought in the cause of Heaven; and, against the lukewarm they raised the cry, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty." *

Many of the officers in the Parliament army officiated as chaplains; prayers and hymns resounded throughout the camp, strict discipline was observed, and care was taken that no acts of lawless violence should be committed by the soldiery. The army of the king, by its insubordination, proved to be a scourge wherever it was quartered, — that of the Parliament, on account of its strict discipline, was considered a protection to the people. Is it surprising, that, with such troops, the military genius of Cromwell should prevail over the king, or that having thus prevailed, a man of his ambition should employ the army to promote his own elevation?

Such was the state of the British nation in the year 1643 when George Fox had nearly attained to manhood. The long Parliament was in session, and its armies were contending with the King; the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, convoked by Parliament, was engaged in debate upon religious doctrines and church government; and the whole nation was shaken and convulsed with new ideas of religious and civil liberty. The Assembly was divided into three parties; Presbyterian, Independent, and Erastian. These Puritan sects did not differ materially in doctrine from the Anglican Church,

* Life of W. Dewsbury, Friends' Library, II. 224.

except in the article of predestination, which they held in its fullest extent; whereas the bishops had gradually modified their views on this point, and some had embraced the Arminian doctrine of free-will.

The great points of difference between the Protestant dissenters and the Episcopal Church, related to ceremonial observances and church discipline.

All the Puritan sects rejected the liturgy and the surplice, but they differed among themselves in regard to church government. The Presbyterians held that the terms presbyter and bishop were used as synonymous in the primitive church.

Accordingly they had but one class of clergy, who were presbyters. From among the lay-members were chosen ruling-elders, who were associated with the ministers in the church sessions and presbyteries. Several Presbyteries composed a Synod, and from the Synods, delegates consisting of ministers and elders were sent to the General Assembly, which was the highest judicature of the church.

The Independents acknowledged no such subordination in their order of government; they affirmed that every congregation was a complete church, and should have full power to make and administer its own discipline. Hence they were sometimes called Congregationalists.

The Erastians took their appellation from Erastus, a German divine of the 16th century.* They maintained that the pastoral office was only persuasive, without power to refuse the sacraments to any, or to inflict censure upon offenders. The punishment of all offences either of a civil or religious nature they would reserve exclusively to the civil magistrates. This was a small sect, there being but two of their ministers in the Westminster Assembly.

The Independents were more numerous and rapidly increasing in influence, but the Presbyterians were by far the most numerous portion of that body.

The Parliament having sent commissioners to treat with

* Neal, I. 190–1.

the Scots, they returned with a proposition for "a solemn league and covenant," between the two nations, which being submitted to the Westminster Assembly was accepted, and soon after was ratified by both branches of the Legislature. This league, adopted in 1643, was professedly for promoting the Protestant religion, and the Covenanters bound themselves with an oath "to endeavour the extirpation of popery and prelacy; that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissioners, deacons and chapters, arch-deacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy." The Covenant was sworn to by the members of the assembly, and of the parliament, and an act was passed requiring it to be taken by all persons in England above the age of eighteen years. In Scotland the public authorities required it to be sworn to and subscribed on a penalty of the confiscation of goods."

The Westminister Assembly next proceeded to draw up a confession of faith, and a form of church government, modelled on the Presbyterian, which, being submitted to Parliament, was confirmed under the title of "A directory for public worship, passed January 3, 1644–5."

The established church having been subverted by the covenant, the previous year, and the Directory not being carried into general practice throughout the kingdom, the people were left at liberty, in most places, to pursue their own inclinations or sense of duty, with regard to divine worship. The various dissenting sects previously existing, which had been somewhat restrained by the ecclesiastical courts, now came forth more boldly to advocate their principles, and religious controversy almost engrossed the public attention. Among these were the Arminians, who opposed the calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, maintaining that Christ died for all men, and that his grace is freely offered to all.

The Baptists were numerous in some places, there being

in the year 1644, forty-seven congregations of them in the country, and seven in London.

They were chiefly distinguished from others by maintaining that the ceremony of baptism must be performed by immersion and confined to adults. They were of two classes or parties: those who adhered to the calvinistic doctrine, were called Particular Baptists; the others, who professed the Arminian tenet of free-will, were called General Baptists.

The Antinomians are mentioned as a considerable sect during that troubled period. They held that the moral law is not obligatory under the gospel, and that the elect cannot do any thing displeasing to God; they denied the necessity of good works as the fruits of holiness, and thus sapped the foundation of morality. Similar views were held by the Ranters, who interpreted Christ's fulfilling the law for us, to be a discharge from any obligation or duty the law required, "as if Christ came not to take away sin, but that we might sin more freely at his cost and with less danger to ourselves."* These doctrines being carried into practice led to the grossest licentiousness.

During the civil wars and the Protectorate of Cromwell, the affairs of government were singularly blended with the concerns of religion. The debates in Parliament often turned upon abstruse points of theology, long sermons were pronounced before them, political prayers were made, and public fasts were proclaimed. Cromwell and his officers exhorted their troops in the camp and in the field; captains and corporals ascended the pulpits and expounded the scriptures, seeking in the Mosaic code and the book of Kings for precepts and examples to justify the principles of their covenant.

The language of the Puritans, even in conversation, was distinguished by a style of thought and expression borrowed from the Hebrew prophets; and many of them gave to their children baptismal names expressive of pious emotions. A remarkable example of this was the name of one of their

* Penn's Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers.

preachers who obtained a seat in Parliament, and is known in history by the singular appellation of Praise-God Barebone.

Amid all the fanaticism which then prevailed, there was, however, a great deal of real piety, and much greater purity of morals, than had been before the Reformation, or immediately thereafter. Many, being dissatisfied with the formality of the Anglican Church, as well as the sanctimonious manners of the Puritans, withdrew from both, and indeed from all visible churches; in order to seek for instruction in private meditation and prayer.

They were known by the name of Seekers, and by some were called the Family of Love.

It was among these, as will be seen in the following narrative, that George Fox found the readiest reception for his doctrines.

CHAPTER II.

Birth and parentage—Serious deportment—Withdraws from company—Temptations—Goes to London—State of Society there—Returns to Drayton, visits Priests and professors of religion—His distress of mind—Religious exercises—Travels into Derbyshire, Leicestershire, and Nottinghamshire—Elizabeth Hooton convinced—George Fox appears in the gospel ministry.

1624—'48.

GEORGE FOX was "born in the month called July," then the fifth month, old style, "in the year 1624, at Drayton-in-the-Clay,"* now called Fenny Drayton, Leicestershire, England.

His father, Christopher Fox, was a weaver by trade, an upright man, and so noted for his probity, that his neighbours called him righteous Christer. His mother's maiden name was Mary Lago, a pious woman, sprung from the stock of the

* The edition of George Fox's Journal referred to in the *biographical* part of this work, is that of Collins, New York, 1800.

martyrs, and "accomplished above most of her degree in the place where she lived." * They were members of the established church, and endeavoured to educate their children in conformity with its doctrines and mode of worship. From his childhood, George "appeared to be of another frame of mind than the rest of his brethren; being more religious, inward, still, solid and observing," as appeared by the answers he would give, and the questions he would ask in relation to divine things.†

His mother observing that he abstained from the sports of childhood, treated him with great tenderness, and encouraged his serious deportment and pious disposition. At the age of eleven years, he was so far brought under the sanctifying influence of divine grace as to attain a state of righteousness and purity. He was taught by this heavenly monitor to be faithful, "inwardly to God, and outwardly to man, and to keep tó yea and nay in all things, that his words might be few and savory, seasoned with grace."

His school education was limited, but it appears that he learned in his youth "to read pretty well, and to write sufficiently to convey his meaning to others." ‡

Some of his relatives observing his serious deportment, wished that he should be educated for a priest,—a term then applied to ministers of the established church,—but others advised a different course, and finally it was concluded to place him with a man who was by trade a shoemaker, who also dealt in wool and kept sheep. During part of his minority, George was employed as a shepherd, a business well adapted to his contemplative spirit, and as Wm. Penn observes, was "a fit emblem of his future service in the church of Christ."

He sometimes used in his dealings the word "verily," and it was a common remark among his acquaintance, "If George says verily, there is no altering him." When boys and rude

* W. Penn's Preface to Geo. Fox's Journal. † Ibid.
‡ Sewel's Hist. of Quakers.

persons would deride him, he did not resent it, but maintained a peaceable behaviour; which, together with his innocency and honesty, gained him the general favour.

At nineteen years of age, being on business at a fair, one of his cousins and another person, who were both professors of religion, invited him to join them in drinking a jug of beer, and he, being thirsty, consented. When they had drunk a glass apiece, his companions began to drink healths, and calling for more beer, they said "he who would not drink should pay all."

George, being grieved with their conduct and conversation, took out a groat and laid it on the table, saying, "If it be so, I will leave you." This incident was the means of awakening more deeply his religious consciousness. He saw that the professors of the christian name were too generally resting in a form of outward observances, without coming under the influence of that life-giving spirit which renovates the soul.

He returned home in deep distress; he did not go to bed that night, nor could he sleep; but "sometimes walked up and down, and sometimes prayed and cried to the Lord." It was then a language was impressed upon his mind, as from on high, "Thou seest how young people go together into vanity, and old people into the earth; thou must forsake all, young and old, keep out of all, and be as a stranger unto all."

As the divine Master was permitted to be tempted in the wilderness, so, in the ordering of Infinite Wisdom, it has often been the lot of his devoted servants to be led into solitude and apparent desertion, for the trial of their faith, that the secrets of their own hearts might be made manifest,—the voice of the true shepherd distinguished from the voice of the stranger, and that great truth established in their experience, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Being impelled by a sense of duty to withdraw from the companionship of men, George Fox, in the year 1643, left

his relatives and travelled to Lutterworth and Northampton, making some stay in those places, and thence passing on, he arrived in Buckinghamshire the following year. During this journey, he kept aloof from all society, sometimes seeking retirement in his chamber, and often walking in the fields or in the chase to wait upon the Lord. At this time, he was subjected to much mental suffering through deep religious exercise, for although he had led a life of remarkable purity, he found within himself a conflict between the powers of light and of darkness, he was assailed by strong temptations, and the enemy of his soul rose like a flood to overwhelm him. It was then "he saw how Christ was tempted," and he was led to believe that through the power of Christ revealed in his soul, he also should be enabled to overcome. At this time he read the Scriptures diligently, and prayed for Divine aid to open their hidden treasures. Many professors of religion, observing his serious deportment, sought his acquaintance, but he, perceiving they did not possess what they professed, shunned their society and lived in seclusion.

Proceeding on his journey, he came to London in the year 1644. The city was then the focus of intense excitement concerning religion and government.

The celebrated Long Parliament and the Westminister Assembly of divines were both in session. Having driven the king from his capital, and overthrown the hierarchy of the Anglican Church, they were now engaged in framing another system of church government and civil polity.

The most powerful among the Puritan sects at that time were the Presbyterians, who were exceedingly zealous in their religious exercises, and so rigid in their principles that they resorted to coercive means for the suppression of heresy. During the short period of their ascendency, persecuting laws were passed, intended to force upon the nation their form of worship and church government.* In this course they were

* Hume, III. 655, and Neal.

opposed by the Independents, who were then in the minority. They contended for liberty of conscience for themselves and for all who "agreed in the fundamentals of Christianity; but when they came to enumerate fundamentals, they were sadly embarrassed,"* as all must be, who plead the cause of religious liberty on any other ground than universal toleration.

The Baptists were then the most tolerant of the prominent sects; and George Fox found tenderness of feeling among them. He had a relative in London of that persuasion, whose name was Pickering; yet even to him he could not impart his feelings, nor join with that sect in religious profession. During his stay there he underwent much mental suffering, for he looked upon the great professors in that city and saw all was dark, and under the chain of darkness."†

Having learned that his parents and relatives were distressed at his absence, and being unwilling to grieve them, he returned to his home in Leicestershire. Some of his relatives advised him to marry, but "he told them he was but a lad, and must get wisdom;" others persuaded him to join the auxiliary band of soldiers, which he refused, and was grieved that they should make him such a proposition. He then went to Coventry, where he took a chamber for a while, until the people began to be acquainted with him. After some time he returned to his native place and continued about a year in great sorrow and trouble, walking many nights by himself.

During this time he had many conferences with Nathaniel Stevens the parish priest of Drayton, and with another priest who sometimes came with him. One of these interviews is thus related in his Journal:

"This priest Stevens asked me, why Christ cried out upon the cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and why he said, 'If it be possible let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but thine be done?' I told him; at that time the sins of all mankind were upon him, and their

* Neal, II. 19. † Journal.

iniquities and transgressions, with which he was wounded; which he was to bear, and to be an offering for, as he was man, but died not as he was God; so, in that he died for all men, tasting death for every man, he was an offering for the sins of the whole world.

"This I spoke being at that time in a measure sensible of Christ's sufferings.* The priest said, 'It was a very good full answer, and such a one as he had not heard.' At that time, he would applaud and speak highly of me to others, and what I said in discourse to him on week-days, he would preach on first-days, which gave me a dislike to him. This priest afterwards became my great persecutor."

In the year 1645, he went to an aged priest at Mansetter, in Warwickshire, and reasoned with him concerning the grounds of temptation and despair, but the priest being ignorant of his condition, could administer no comfort, and bade him take tobacco and sing psalms. Tobacco he did not like, and psalms he was not in a state to sing, for his mind was bowed under the burden of his sorrows. He then resorted for counsel to Dr. Craddock, of Coventry, who was becoming noted as a minister and an author of religious works. This learned man was, however, but little acquainted with the school of Christ, for when George inquired of him concerning the origin of temptation and despair, he asked, "Who was Christ's father and mother?" George replied that "Mary was his mother, and he was supposed to be the son of Joseph, but he was the Son of God."

As they were walking together in the garden, George chanced to set his foot upon the side of a bed, at which the Doctor raged as though his house had been on fire.

This broke off their conference, and George came away in sorrow, finding the priests all miserable comforters.

He was next advised to try the effect of medicine and blood-letting. But a lancet being applied to his arms and

* See Dissertation on Doctrines, in this volume, where this passage is quoted

head, the blood would not flow: his body seemed to be dried up with grief and trouble. In the extremity of his distress, he could have wished that he had never been born, or that he had been born blind and deaf, so that he might not have witnessed the wickedness and profanity of men.

When Christmas came, and others were engaged in the festivities usual at that season, he could not join in their sports, but he visited the poor, the widows, and the orphans, to whom he gave alms to supply their necessities. When invited to weddings, he declined to attend, but soon after he would visit the married pair, and if they were poor, he would give them money, for he had the means not only to support himself, but to contribute to the comfort of others.

Early in the year 1646, as he was going into Coventry, he was led to reflect on the proposition that "all Christians are believers, both Protestants and Papists;" and it was made clear to his understanding that if all were believers, then were all born of God, and passed from death unto life, and that none were true believers but such, whatever might be their profession. Afterward, while walking in the fields, it was opened to him "that being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ," and he wondered at it, for such was the belief in which he had been educated.

At another time, that Scripture text, "God who made the world, dwelleth not in temples made with hands," was impressively revived in his mind, and he saw clearly that the temple of the Lord is the heart or soul of man, which should be dedicated to his service. This at first seemed strange to him, for the people were accustomed to call their houses of worship dreadful places, holy ground, and the temples of God. This was made known to him as he was walking through the fields to the house of a relative, where, when he came, he learned that Nathaniel Stevens, the parish priest, had been before him, and told them "he was afraid of George for going after new lights."

He now ceased to frequent the parish church, which grieved his relatives, who, although they saw beyond the priests, still continued in attendance on their service. He showed them from the Scriptures that there was an anointing within man to teach him, and that the Lord would teach his people himself.

Having removed to another place, he found a people who relied much upon dreams. He told them that unless "they could distinguish between dream and dream, they would confound all together, for there were three sorts of dreams: multitude of business sometimes caused dreams; and there were whisperings of Satan in man in the night season, and there were speakings of God in man in dreams." These people afterwards advanced in religious experience, and became Friends.

About the beginning of the year 1647, he was led by a sense of religious duty, to travel into Derbyshire, and from thence into Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire; in all which counties he found friendly and religious people, with whom he had many conferences. One of these was Elizabeth Hootton, who subsequently was joined in membership with Friends, and was the first female who became a minister among them.

The mental sufferings of George Fox still continued, and he was often under great temptations. He fasted much, and walked abroad in solitary places. Taking his Bible, he sat in hollow trees or secluded spots, and often, at night, he walked alone in silent meditation. He was thus led, for the trial and confirmation of his faith, to follow in the footsteps of the holy Redeemer, who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

During all this time he did not join in religious profession with any, but gave himself up to wait upon the Lord, and having forsaken father and mother, home and kindred, he travelled from place to place, as impelled by a sense of duty. But although his exercises and trials were great, he often had intermissions, and sometimes experienced such heavenly joy,

that all his troubles seemed as nothing for Christ's sake. He then compared his situation to that of being in Abraham's bosom, and exclaimed from the fulness of his heart, "O! the everlasting love of God to my soul! Thou, Lord, makest a fruitful field a barren wilderness, and a barren wilderness a fruitful field! Thou bringest down and settest up! Thou killest and makest alive! All honour and glory be to thee, oh Lord of glory! The knowledge of Thee in the spirit is life, but that knowledge which is fleshly works death."

He saw that apostates and pretenders could use the words of Christ and his Apostles as recorded in the Holy Scriptures; but not being governed by the spirit of Christ, they were ready to conform to anything for the promotion of their private ends. They could persecute, and rend, and devour the sheep of Christ, but they neither knew the voice of the true shepherd nor obeyed his law.

Having learned to regard the parish priests less favourably, he now began to look more toward the Dissenters. Among these he found openness to hear, and tenderness to feel, for they had made some progress in religious experience, and many of them were afterwards convinced of the doctrines he taught. He found, however, that as he had forsaken the priests, so he must leave the dissenting preachers, for none of them could administer relief to his soul that was hungering for spiritual food. It was then a voice was addressed to his mental ear, saying, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition." His heart leaped for joy—his desires for communion with God grew stronger—his spiritual perceptions became more clear, and he found that "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Thus he grew in the knowledge of divine things, not by a reliance upon any man, book, or writing, "but through the operation of divine grace in the soul." For though he diligently read the scriptures, that speak of Christ and of God, yet "he knew him not but by revelation, as he who hath the

key did open, and as the Father of Life drew him unto his Son by his spirit." In describing his condition at this time, he says in his Journal, "Then the Lord led me gently along, and let me see his love, which was endless and eternal, surpassing all the knowledge that men have in the natural state, or can get by history or books." * * * "When I was in the deep, under all shut up, I could not believe I should ever overcome; my troubles and my temptations were so great that I often thought I should have despaired. But when Christ opened to me how he was tempted by the same devil, and had overcome him and bruised his head; and that through him and his power, light, grace, and spirit, I should overcome also, I had confidence in him." * * * "Thus, in the deepest miseries, in the greatest sorrows and temptations that beset me, the Lord in his mercy did keep me. I found two thirsts in me: the one after the creatures to have got help and strength there; and the other after the Lord, the creator, and his Son Jesus Christ, and I saw all the world could do me no good. If I had had a king's diet, palace, and attendance, all would have been as nothing, for nothing gave me comfort but the Lord by his power." * * * "I saw how death had passed upon all men, and oppressed the seed of God in man, and in me; and how I, in the seed, came forth, and what the promise was to." "Yet it was so that there seemed to be two pleading in me; and questionings arose in my mind about gifts and prophecies, and I was tempted again to despair, as if I had sinned against the Holy Ghost. I was in great perplexity and trouble many days, yet I gave myself up to the Lord still."

"One day when I had been walking solitarily abroad, and was come home, I was taken up in the love of God, so that I could not but admire the greatness of his love, and while I was in that condition, it was opened unto me by the eternal light and power, and therein I clearly saw, that all was done and to be done in and by Christ; and how he conquers and destroys this tempter the Devil, and all his works, and is atop

of him, and that all these troubles were good for me, and temptations for the trial of my faith, which Christ had given me. The Lord opened me, that I saw through all these troubles and temptations. My living faith was raised that I saw all was done by Christ the life, and my belief was in him." *

The long and painful exercises through which he was passing were designed by Infinite Wisdom to qualify him for the work of the ministry, to which he was soon to be called by the great Head of the Church. This was the baptism of fire, and of the Holy Spirit, intended to take away the dross, and the tin, and the "reprobate silver," that nothing but the pure gold, which abides the fire, might remain; and thus he was prepared for a vessel in the Lord's house.

As the Apostle in his sufferings, "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake which is the Church, so must the true ministers of the gospel be baptized at times into a feeling of the states of the people." This was subsequently made known to George Fox when he was shown that the various propensities of animal nature are all discoverable in man. Thus, when he saw that the nature of dogs, swine and vipers, of Sodom and Egypt, of Cain, Ishmael, and Esau, were all to be found within, he was led to inquire "why should I be thus, seeing I was never addicted to commit these evils?" Then was the language intelligibly addressed to his mind, that, "It was needful he should have a sense of all conditions, for how else should he speak to all conditions?"

Having heard of a woman in Lancashire who had fasted two-and-twenty days, he went to see her, but perceived that she was under a temptation. He then passed on to Duckenfield and Mansfield, where he staid awhile and "declared truth among them." Some were convinced, and being turned to the Lord's teachings in themselves "stood in the truth." Many of the professors of religion who pleaded for sin and imperfection during life, were much incensed when they heard him preach the doctrine of "perfection or of a holy and sinless

* Journal, I. 10–12.

life." This was in the year 1647, and appears to have been near the beginning of his public ministry.

About this time there was a meeting appointed by the Baptists at Broughton in Leicestershire with some that had separated from them. Not many of the Baptists came, but a multitude of other people, and George Fox being there preached the gospel to them. He had great openings in the scriptures, and when he reasoned with the people concerning the doctrines of salvation some were convinced, and remained steadfast in the faith.

While walking near the parish house of worship in Mansfield, this language was impressed upon his mind, "that which people trample upon, must be thy food." And immediately it was opened to him by the spirit of truth, that the professors of religion were living upon words, and they fed one another upon words, but "they trampled under foot the blood of the Son of God, which blood was his life." "This is the bread of God which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*

A report having gone abroad that George Fox was "a young man who had a discerning spirit," many came from far and near to see him, but he was apprehensive of being drawn into words without the life and power of the gospel. This salutary fear preserved him from being elated with the disclosures of heavenly truth, and restrained him from engaging in unprofitable discussions. Another cause why public attention was directed to him, was the prediction of a person named Brown, who on his death-bed spoke of the work that George Fox would be made instrumental to perform.

Soon after Brown's burial, George fell into such a condition that he looked like a corpse, and many who came to see him supposed him to be really dead. In this trance he continued fourteen days, after which his sorrows began to abate, and with brokenness of heart and tears of joy he acknowledged the infinite love of God which is beyond the power of language

* John vi. 33.

to express. Being "brought through the very ocean of darkness and death," he could say that he "had been in spiritual Babylon, Egypt, and the grave," but by the grace and power of God he was delivered and enabled to rejoice in the assurance of divine acceptance.

He attended a meeting of priests and professors at the house of a justice, where he heard them discoursing on that expression of Paul, who said, "he had not known sin but by the law which said, 'thou shalt not lust.'" They held that this was said of the outward law. But he told them it was spoken after Paul's conversion; for he had the outward law before, when he was in the lust of persecution, "but this was the law of God in his mind which he served, which the laws in his members warred against, for that which he thought had been life to him, proved death."

Being at a great religious meeting at Mansfield, he felt constrained by a sense of duty to appear in prayer, and the Lord's power was so eminently manifested among them, that the house seemed to be shaken, so that some of the congregation remarked, "it was now as in the days of the Apostles, when the house was shaken where they were." The effect of this prayer on the audience encouraged another professor to pray, but he not being under the same influence, brought a sense of deadness over the assembly, whereupon George was asked to pray again, "but he could not pray in man's will."

This incident brings to mind the testimony of William Penn, who says of George Fox that "above all he excelled in prayer: the inwardness and weight of his spirit, the reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, and the fewness and fulness of his words, have often struck even strangers with admiration, as they used to reach others with consolation."*

At his first appearance in the ministry, his discourses were brief, consisting chiefly of a few weighty expressions, which, being adapted to the states of the hearers, gained an entrance into hearts already prepared for their reception.† His

* Preface to George Fox's Journal. † Sewel, I. 18.

chief concern was to call their attention to the word, or spirit of God manifested in the soul, which he usually designated by the expressive scriptural term, "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This divine power he sometimes referred to as the blood of Christ, which is the saint's drink, for according to the scriptures "the blood is the life," and "the life is the light of men."*

He attended a meeting of religious professors, where Captain Amos Stoddard was present. They were discoursing of the blood of Christ, when George Fox felt constrained to cry out, "Do ye not see the blood of Christ? See it in your hearts, to sprinkle your hearts and consciences from dead works, to serve the living God." This startled the professors who would have the blood only without them, and not in them; but Captain Stoddard said, "Let the youth speak, hear the youth speak," when he saw they endeavoured to bear him down with many words.

Having heard of another great meeting to be held at Leicester, for religious controversy, in which Presbyterians, Independents, Episcopalians, and Baptists were to be concerned, he attended and listened to their discussions. At length, a woman asked a question, from the first epistle of Peter, "What that birth was? to wit, being born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever?" The priest said to her, "I permit not a woman to speak in the church," though he had before given liberty for any to speak. This brought George Fox to his feet, who stepped up and asked the priest, "Dost thou call this place a church? Or dost thou call this mixed multitude a church? But instead of answering him, the priest asked "what a church was?" George replied, "The church is the pillar and ground of truth, made up of living stones, living members, a spiritual household, of which Christ is the head: but he is not the head of a mixed multitude, or of an old house made up of lime, stones, and wood. This threw them all into

* Gen. ix. 4. John i. 4.

commotion, the priest came down from his pulpit, the people out of their pews, and the discussion was broken up.

Returning again into Nottinghamshire, he visited the vale of Beavor, where he "preached repentance to the people," and many were convinced through his ministry. Here he was again assailed by temptation. One morning as he sat by the fire, a suggestion of Atheism arose in his mind, accompanied by an impression, that all things came by nature, "the elements and the stars come over him," the heavens were clouded, and darkness shrouded his mind. As he sat still, waiting for light, a living hope arose within him and a true voice said, "There is a living God who made all things." Immediately the cloud was dispelled, the temptation vanished away, and his heart was filled with joy and praise.

Soon afterwards he met with some persons who, having yielded to a similar temptation, denied the existence of a Deity, and he was enabled from his own experience to speak to their condition, and to convince them that there is a living God.

About this time, there being at Mansfield a sitting of the justices for the purpose of hiring servants, George Fox, from a sense of duty attended, in order to exhort them not to oppress the poor in their wages. He also attended other places of public resort, warning and admonishing the people to cease from oppression, to abstain from oaths, to turn their hearts to the Lord, and to do justly.

Thus the work to which he was called went forward and prospered, many being turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. During the years 1647, and '48, in many places, meetings of Friends were gathered, who were led to relinquish their dependence on outward observances, and to receive with gladness the message of George Fox, that "Jesus Christ teaches his people himself," through the influence of his "light, spirit, and power."

CHAPTER III.

His views on gospel ministry—on lawyers—physicians and priests—on understanding the scriptures. He goes into the "steeple-house" at Nottingham—the "more sure word of prophecy"—He is cast into prison—taken to the Sheriff's house—again in jail—released and travels in the ministry—is beaten and abused at Mansfield—reproves the Ranters at Coventry—meets with Priest Stevens—prays for a sick man who is healed—attends a meeting at Derby—is examined and committed to prison.

1648—'50.

THE views of George Fox in relation to the gospel ministry, were clear, consistent, and practical; being derived from the manifestations of divine grace, and corroborated by the Sacred Scriptures. The authority claimed by the clergy of the Anglican Church, as well as by the Romish priesthood, by virtue of their ordination and pretended apostolic succession, he considered utterly fallacious; inasmuch, as it was derived through an apostate Church, and was held to be sufficient, without regard to personal character or religious experience.

None are successors of the apostles, in their ministry, unless endued with a measure of the same divine spirit that dwelt in the apostles, even as they only who have the faith of Abraham are accounted his children and heirs of the promises. As well might a man entirely ignorant of natural science, attempt to fill the chair of philosophy, as for one who has not experienced the regenerating power of Divine grace, to assume the office of expounding the sacred truths of religion.

The gospel of Christ, although it be "glad tidings" to the poor in spirit, is not a mere relation of events that are past. It is a living reality—a quickening influence, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "The gospel," says George Fox, "was preached to Adam, the seed of

the woman was promised to bruise the serpent's head, and this was, and is the power of God the glorious gospel."* In reply to some who asserted that "the gospel was the four books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, he affirmed that "the gospel was the power of God which was preached before [the narratives] of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were written, and it was preached to every creature (of which a great part might never see nor hear those four books), so that every creature was to obey the power of God; for Christ the Spiritual man would judge the world according to the gospel, that is, according to his invisible power."†

The true ministers of the gospel are therefore those only, who live and move under the influence of this power, and are furnished by it with matter adapted to the states of the people to whom they minister.

Being shocked with the venality of the clergy, George Fox exclaims, "Oh! the vast sums of money that are got by the trade they make of selling the scriptures, and by their preaching, from the highest bishop to the lowest priest! What one trade in the world is comparable to it? Notwithstanding the scriptures were given forth freely, Christ commanded his ministers to preach freely, and the prophets and apostles denounced judgments against all covetous hirelings and diviners for money. But in this free spirit of the Lord Jesus was I sent forth to declare the word of life and reconciliation freely, that all might come to Christ who gives freely and renews up into the image of God which men and women were in before they fell, that they might sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

This disinterested minister of the gospel had learned to deny himself, and to renounce all dependence upon his own abilities, natural or acquired. He waited patiently on Him "who is the true shepherd and bishop of souls," who "putteth forth his own sheep and goeth before them," and he found in

* George Fox's Works, III. 564. † Journal, II. 23.

his own experience the divine promise fulfilled, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

In his Journal, he thus describes the state of joy and peace that succeeded his deep trials and mental conflicts: "Now was I come up in spirit through the flaming sword into the paradise of God. All things were new, and all the creation gave another smell unto me than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew nothing but pureness, innocency, and righteousuess, being renewed up into the image of God by Christ Jesus; so that I was come up to the state of Adam, which he was in before the fall. The creation was opened to me; and it was showed me, how all things had their names given them according to their nature and virtue. I was at a stand in my mind, whether I should practise physic for the good of mankind, seeing the nature and virtues of the creatures were so opened to me by the Lord. But I was immediately taken up in spirit, to see into another or more steadfast state than Adam's in innocency, even into a state in Christ Jesus, that should never fall. The Lord showed me that such as were faithful to him, in the power and light of Christ, should come up into that state in which Adam was before he fell; in which the admirable works of the creation and the virtues thereof may be known, through the openings of that divine Word of wisdom and power by which they were made. Great things did the Lord lead me into, and wonderful depths were opened unto me, beyond what can, by words, be declared; but as people come into subjection to the spirit of God, and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, they may receive the Word of wisdom that opens all things, and come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being." *

Being thus divinely enlightened, he saw that those who were engaged in the three great professions of Law, Physic, and Divinity, were too generally ignorant of that wisdom which cometh down from above, and is profitable to direct us, even in natural things. He was led to believe that by abiding

* George Fox's Journal, I. 21, 22.

under this divine influence, these professions might be reformed. The lawyers, by attending to "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," would see that "he who wrongs his neighbour wrongs himself," and that every man "should do unto others as he would that they should do unto him." The physician might thus be enabled "to receive a right knowledge of the creatures, and to understand the virtues of them, which the Word of Wisdom, by which they were created and are upheld, hath given them." The priests, by obedience to the same holy power, "might be reformed and brought into the true faith, which is the gift of God." He saw, "concerning the priests, that, although they stood in deceit, and acted by the dark power which both they and their people were kept under, yet they were not the greatest deceivers spoken of in scripture, for they were not come so far as many of these." The greatest deceivers were those who, having experienced the goodness of God, and heard his voice, and known his spirit, yet "turned from the Spirit and the Word, and went into gainsaying." * * * "These were they that led the world after them, who, having the form of godliness, denied the power thereof."

He was also instructed how it was "that people read the scriptures without a right sense of them, and without duly applying them to their own states. For when they read that death reigned from Adam to Moses; and that the law and the prophets were until John; and that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John, they read these things without them, and applied them to others; (and the things were true of others,) but they did not turn in to find the truth of these things in themselves." It was opened to him how death reigned from Adam to Moses; "from the entrance into transgression till they came to the ministration of condemnation, which restrains people from sin that brings death." "When the ministration of Moses is passed through, the ministry of the prophets comes to be read and understood, which reaches through the figures, types and shadows unto

John, the greatest prophet born of a woman; whose ministration prepares the way of the Lord by bringing down the exalted mountains and making straight paths. As this ministration is passed through, an entrance comes to be known into the everlasting kingdom." * * * "But all must first know the voice crying in the wilderness,—in their hearts, which, through transgression, were become as a wilderness." * * * "They could not know the spiritual meaning of Moses, the prophets, and John's words, nor see their path and travels, much less see through them, and to the end of them into the kingdom, unless they had the spirit and light of Jesus; nor could they know the words of Christ and of his apostles without his spirit."

Among all the professors of religion with whom George Fox conversed, he found no sect willing to receive the doctrine that man, by obedience, may now come up to that sinless state which Adam was in before the fall; still less would they admit that a measure of the same spirit that guided the prophets and apostles may now be experienced by the faithful, though it is certain that none can truly understand their writings without the influence of the same spirit by which they were dictated. "I was sent," he says, "to turn people from darkness to the light, that they might receive Christ Jesus; for, to as many as should receive him in his light, I saw he would give power to become the sons of God; which I had obtained by receiving Christ. I was to direct people to the spirit, that gave forth the scriptures, by which they might be led into all truth, and so up to Christ and God, as they had been who gave them forth. I was to turn them to the grace of God, and to the truth in the heart which came by Jesus; that by this grace they might be taught, which would bring them salvation, that their hearts might be established by it, their words might be seasoned, and all might come to know their salvation nigh. I saw Christ had died for all men, was a propitiation for all, and had enlightened all men and women with

his divine and saving light; and that none could be true believers but those who believed therein."

Being thus called and qualified to preach the kingdom of Christ—the reign of God in the soul—he went forth with gladness to proclaim to others that which had become, to himself, the source of consolation and joy. He was required to bring men off from their own ways, to Christ the new and living way; and from churches set up by human authority, to "the Church in God, the general assembly written in heaven" of which Christ is the head.

"I was," he says, "to bring people off from all the world's religions, which are in vain; that they might know the pure religion, might visit the fatherless, the widows and the strangers, and keep themselves from the spots of the world: then there would not be so many beggars, the sight of whom often grieved my heart, as it denoted so much hard-heartedness among those that professed the name of Christ. I was to bring them off from all the world's fellowships, prayings and singings, which stood in forms without power; that their fellowship might be in the Holy Ghost, the eternal Spirit of God! that they might pray in the Holy Ghost, sing in the Spirit and with the grace that comes by Jesus; making melody in their hearts to the Lord, who hath sent his beloved Son to be their Saviour, caused his heavenly Sun to shine upon all the world, and through them all; and his heavenly rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, (as his outward rain doth fall, and his outward sun doth shine on all) which is God's unspeakable love to the world." Moreover, he was restrained from giving to any, whether high or low, rich or poor, those tokens of reverence, which, having originated in human vanity and pride, were, in his view, calculated to nourish the same pernicious passions. He could not "put off the hat," nor bow the knee, nor use vain compliments to any, and when addressing a single person he was required to use the singular pronoun *thou* or *thee*. This adherence to ancient scriptural language rendered him obnoxious to much opprobrium and

abuse; for all classes, not even excepting ministers and professors of religion, were influenced by the love of worldly honour; "they received honour one of another, and sought not the honour that cometh from God only."

Deeply impressed with the importance of practical righteousness, which alone can secure the happiness of individuals and of nations, he went frequently to courts, fairs, and other places of public resort, in order to exhort the people to justice, veracity, and temperance. He warned those who kept houses of entertainment not to supply their guests with more liquor than would do them good; he bore a testimony against wakes, feasts, may-games, and stage plays; and he exhorted teachers of schools and heads of families to train up their children in the fear of the Lord, and to conduct themselves as patterns of sobriety and virtue.

Being at Nottingham on the first day of the week, he attended Friends' meeting where the divine presence was eminently felt among them; but he was led by a sense of duty to leave them and go to the "steeple-house," or place of worship erected for the established church. When he arrived there he heard the priest take for his text these words, "we have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts." "This," the priest told them, "was the scriptures, by which they were to try all doctrines, religions, and opinions." But George, being as he believed, under the influence of the Lord's power, "was made to cry out, Oh! no; it is not the scriptures;" and he told them it was the Holy Spirit by which the holy men of God gave forth the scriptures, whereby opinions, religions, and judgments were to be tried; for it led into all truth, and so gave the knowledge of all truth. "The Jews had the scriptures, yet resisted the Holy Ghost, and rejected Christ, the bright morning star." "They persecuted him and his apostles, and took upon them to try their doctrines by the

scriptures, but erred in judgment and did not try them aright; because they tried them without the Holy Ghost." *

For speaking thus, he was cast into a loathsome filthy prison, but the word spoken had taken effect in the hearts of the people, and among those convinced were the head sheriff and his family.

He was invited to the residence of the sheriff, whose wife met him in the hall, took him by the hand, and said, "Salvation is come to our house." Being lodged at the house of this sheriff, whose name was John Reckless, George Fox had great meetings there, some persons of considerable rank attended, and "the Lord's power appeared eminently amongst them."

So great was the change wrought in the sheriff that he sent for his colleague in office, and for a woman whom they had defrauded in their dealings; before whom he confessed the wrong they had done her, but she knew nothing of it, and the other sheriff denied it. John Reckless insisted however that it was so, and that the other sheriff knew it well enough, whom he exhorted to follow his example in making restitution. The next market-day, as George Fox and this friendly sheriff were walking in his chamber, the latter said, "I must go into the market and preach repentance to the people." Accordingly he went, in his slippers, through the market and along the streets, preaching repentance. Several others were called into the same service, who addressed their exhortations to the mayor and magistrates. These officers, being highly incensed, sent for George Fox from the sheriff's house and again committed him to the common jail. During his imprisonment, one of those who had been convinced of his doctrines, went before the judicial authorities and offered to suffer in his stead, "body for body and life for life."

The time of the assize being come, he was ordered to be taken before the judge, but so dilatory was the officer in obeying the order that the court was adjourned before he arrived,

* Journal, I. 32, 33.

at which the judge expressed his displeasure, "saying he would have admonished the youth if he had been brought before him." This backwardness in bringing him to trial, appears to have arisen from a consciousness on the part of the magistrates, that they had no legal grounds for his commitment, and yet they continued him in prison some time longer.

Being at length released, he again travelled in the work of the ministry, and coming to Mansfield Woodhouse, he visited a deranged woman whose physician was endeavouring to bleed her, but could get no blood. George advised the attendants to unbind her, which being done, he spoke to her in gospel authority, and desired her to be still and quiet. This was so effectual in calming her perturbed spirit, that she became convalescent. "Afterwards," he says, "she received the truth, and continued in it to her death, and the Lord's name was honoured to whom the glory of all his works belongs."

While at Mansfield Woodhouse, he went to the "steeple-house," and felt constrained by a sense of duty to preach to the priest and people; but they fell upon him in a great rage, and beat him severely with their bibles and sticks. Although he was so much bruised that he could scarcely walk, they put him in the stocks for some hours; after which he was taken before a magistrate at a Knight's house, where there were many great persons, who, seeing how cruelly he had been treated, set him at liberty. He was, however, followed by the rude populace, and because he "preached to them the word of life," they stoned him out of town. When he had travelled about a mile, he met with some persons who kindly administered to his comfort, and he rejoiced in believing, "that some persons had that day been convinced of the Lord's truth, and turned to his inward teaching."

From Nottinghamshire he went into Leicestershire, accompanied by several Friends, and coming to Barrow they met a company of Baptists, with whom he desired to speak because they were separated from the public worship. The conversation that ensued is thus related in his Journal: "One of

them said, what was not of faith, was sin. Whereupon I asked them, What faith was? and how it was wrought in man? But they turned off from that and spake of their baptism in water. Then I asked them, whether their mountain of sin was brought down, and laid low in them? and their rough and crooked ways made smooth and straight in them? They looked upon the scriptures as meaning outward mountains and ways; but I told them, they must find them in their own hearts; which they seemed to wonder at. We asked them, who baptized John the Baptist? who baptized Peter, and John, and the rest of the apostles? and put them to prove by scripture, that these were baptized with water: but they were silent. Then I asked them, Seeing Judas who betrayed Christ, and was called the son of perdition, had hanged himself, what son of perdition was that which Paul spoke of, that sat in the temple of God, exalted above all that is called God? And what temple of God that was in which the son of perdition sat? And whether he that betrays Christ within, in himself, be not one in nature with that Judas, that betrayed Christ without? But they could not tell what to make of this, nor what to say to it. So, after some discourse, we parted; and some of them were loving to us."

On the First-day following, George Fox and his companions came to Bagworth, and went to the "steeple-house," whither some Friends had gone before them, and were locked in with the priest and people. After the usual service was over, the door was opened, when George and the others went in, and were permitted to preach among them.

Passing on from thence, he came to Coventry, where he heard there were some people in prison for religion. As he went towards the jail, his heart was filled with a sense of divine love, and holy joy; but when he came to the place where the prisoners were, he felt the power of darkness to prevail, and on conversing with them, he discovered they were Ranters, who said they were Gods. Being grieved with their sad delusion, he held some discourse with them, and reproved them

sharply for their blasphemous expressions. One of them afterwards published a recantation, and they were set at liberty.

From Coventry he came to Atherstone, and it being their lecture day, he went into the chapel, where he spoke to the priest and people, who were generally quiet and some were convinced of his doctrines. He next came with some of his Friends to Market Bossoth, on a lecture day, where he found the officiating minister was his former pastor, Nathaniel Stevens. When George spoke to the people, Stevens began to rage, and told them not to hear him, for he was mad, upon which they fell upon the Friends and stoned them out of the town. In this instance, however, they received but little injury, and were consoled with the reflection that a good impression had been made on at least a few of the audience, for some of the people cried out that, "the priest durst not stand to prove his ministry."

As George travelled on through Leicestershire, he came to Twy Cross. At this place, being desired by some Friends to visit a great man, who lay sick and was given over by his physicians, he complied with their request, and after preaching to him "the word of life, he was moved to pray by him, and the Lord was entreated, and restored him to health."

Many meetings of Friends being gathered in Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, George Fox, in the year 1650, addressed to them an epistle, from which the following passage is quoted:

"FRIENDS: — The children of God are pure in heart, not looking only at the outside. The favour of the world and friendship thereof is enmity to God: man may soon be stained with it. 'Oh! love the stranger, and be as strangers in the world, and to the world!' For they that followed Christ in his cross, were strangers in the world, and condemned by the world; and the world knew him not, neither doth it [know] them that follow him now. So marvel not, if the world hate you; for the world lieth in hatred and wick-

edness. Who love this world, are enemies to Christ; and who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and have him for their Lord over them, they are redeemed out of the world. The world would have a Christ, but not to rule over them; the nature of the world is above Christ in man, until Christ hath subdued that nature in man. While the nature of the world doth rule in man, Oh! the deaf ears and blind eyes, and the understandings, that are all shut up amongst them, with which they judge! But [they] who love the Lord Jesus Christ, do not mind the world's judgment, nor are troubled at it; but consider all our brethren, who have gone before us." * * * *

GEORGE FOX.*

Having come to Derby, he lodged at a doctor's house, whose wife and several more in that town were convinced of the principles of Friends. While walking in his chamber, the bell rang, and on asking his hostess "what it rang for," she told him "there was to be a great lecture that day, and many officers of the army, priests, and preachers, were to be there, and a colonel that was a preacher." From a persuasion of duty, George attended the meeting, and when the others had done, he spake to them what he conceived was required of him. They were tolerably quiet, but an officer came to him, and, taking him by the hand, said that he and the two persons that were with him must go before the magistrates.

It was in the afternoon about one o'clock, when they came before the justices. They asked him why he came thither?

George Fox replied, "God moved me so to do. He dwells not in temples made with hands. All your preaching, baptism, and sacrifices, will never sanctify you, but you must look unto Christ in you, and not unto men, for it is Christ that sanctifies."

The magistrates seemed at a loss what to do with him; sometimes thrusting him out of the room, and then calling

* George Fox's Works, VII. 17.

him in; alternately questioning and deriding him, until nine o'clock at night.

At length they said, with a view to entrap him, "Are you sanctified?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes, I am in the paradise of God."

JUSTICES. "Have you no sin?"

GEORGE FOX. "Christ, my saviour, has taken away my sin; and in him there is no sin."

JUSTICES. "How do you know that Christ abides in you?"

GEORGE FOX. "By his spirit that he hath given us."

JUSTICES. "Are any of you Christ?"

GEORGE FOX. "Nay, we are nothing, Christ is all."

JUSTICES. "If a man steal, is it no sin?"

GEORGE FOX. "All unrighteousness is sin."

From the last two questions, it would seem that they wished to identify him with the Ranters, whose principles were no less abhorrent to him than to the public authorities.

At length, being wearied with examining him, they committed him and another man to the House of Correction in Derby for six months, as appears by the following mittimus:

"To the Master of the House of Correction in Derby, greeting:—

"We have sent you herewith the bodies of George Fox, late of Mansfield, in the county of Nottingham, and John Fretwell, late of Staniesby, in the county of Derby, husbandman, brought before us this present day, and charged with the avowed uttering and broaching divers blasphemous opinions, contrary to the late act of Parliament; which, upon their examination before us, they have confessed. These are therefore to require you forthwith, upon sight hereof, to receive them, the said George Fox and John Fretwell, into your custody, and them therein safely to keep during the space of six months without bail or mainprize, or until they shall find sufficient security to be of good behaviour, or be thence delivered by order from ourselves. Hereof you are not to fail.

Given under our hands and seals this 30th day of October, 1650. GER. BENNET.
NATH. BARTON."

The act of Parliament referred to in the mittimus, had been passed about three months before, and was evidently intended to apply to the wild and extravagant notions of the Ranters. It provides that "any persons, not distempered in their brains, who shall maintain any mere creature to be God, or to be infinite, almighty, &c., or shall deny the holiness of God, or shall maintain that all acts of wickedness or unrighteousness are not forbidden in Holy Scripture, or that God approves them, * * * shall suffer six months imprisonment for the first offence; and for the second, be banished, and if they return without license, shall be treated as felons." *

The opinions or doctrines recited in this act bear no resemblance whatever to those of George Fox; similar pretensions had been severely censured by him at Coventry, and there was nothing in his answers before the magistrates to justify them in the course they pursued. Moreover, when we take into view that both of them were Independents, whose tenets admitted of no interference of the civil power in spiritual concerns, and that one of them (Barton) was a preacher and a colonel, who probably had no regular ordination, and claimed a spiritual gift as his qualification for the ministry, it is abundantly manifest that their proceedings were inconsistent with their own professions, as well as illegal and arbitrary.

John Fretwell, who was committed with George Fox, did not remain faithful to his testimony. He found means through the jailor, to obtain leave from one of the justices to go and see his mother, and thus gained his liberty.

Soon after the imprisonment of George Fox, he wrote to the priests and magistrates of Derby. To the former he said, "I was sent to tell you that if you had received the gospel freely, you would administer it freely without money and

* Gough, I. 91.

without price, but you make a trade and sale of what the prophets and apostles have spoken; and so you corrupt the truth. "You are the men that lead silly women captive, who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: you have the form of godliness, but you deny the power."

To the two magistrates who committed him, he wrote to this effect:

"Friends:—I am forced, in tender love to your souls, to write unto you, and to beseech you to consider what you do, and what the commands of God call for. He doth require justice and mercy, to break every yoke, and to let the oppressed go free. But who calleth for justice? or loveth mercy? or contendeth for the truth? Is not judgment turned backward? Doth not justice stand afar off? Is not truth silenced in the streets? or can equity enter? Do not they that depart from evil make themselves a prey?

"Oh! consider what ye do in time, and take heed whom ye imprison; for the magistrate is set for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. I entreat you, in time, take heed what you do: for surely the Lord will come, and make manifest both the builders and the work. If it be of man, it will fail; but if it be of God, nothing will overthrow it. Therefore I desire and pray that you would take heed and beware what you do, lest ye be found fighters against God.

GEORGE FOX."

CHAPTER IV.

Preaching of George Fox in steeple-houses considered—His letter to Col. Barton—To the Mayor of Derby concerning oaths—Conversation on perfection—The jailor convinced—Epistle of George Fox to Friends—Is visited by his relations—Refuses to give bond for good behaviour—Abused by the magistrates, and remanded to prison—His letter to the justice and to the priests—A trooper convinced—George Fox refuses a captaincy—Is put in jail among the felons—Letter to the judges on the penal laws—Epistle to Friends.

1650—'1.

THE practice of George Fox, and others among the primitive Friends, of speaking occasionally in houses of worship erected for the established Church, having been censured by some modern writers, appears to demand an attentive consideration. It is sometimes spoken of as though it had been a practice peculiar to Friends, and by some has been adduced as an evidence of fanaticism. This, however, is a misapprehension, arising from the application of modern standards in attempting to judge of the actions of a former generation, who were placed in circumstances widely different from ours.

The steeple-houses, as they were then very frequently called, were the property of the nation; they had been generally built with the common funds, and the whole population had a right, and were indeed required by law, to attend them. Prior to the downfall of the Anglican church, her clergy alone had a legal warrant to officiate in them as ministers. But "the solemn league and covenant," adopted by Parliament in 1643, subverted the Episcopal hierarchy, and in the following year the Directory, or Presbyterian form of church government, was established by law, but not generally executed. Indeed, it appears to have been carried into practice in only two or three counties,* and thus in the greater part of the kingdom

* Neal, II. 26.

the people were left free to choose their own religious teachers and form of worship.

It was a period of intense public excitement. For many years, the most momentous questions of religion and government were earnestly discussed, not only in Parliament and in the Westminster Assembly, but throughout the nation: — in the pulpit, and at the bar; in the martial camp, and at the domestic hearth. The pulpits were no longer reserved for the priesthood; laymen, claiming a divine call, were admitted into them, and the officers of the Parliament army, after exhorting their soldiers in the camp, entered the "steeple-house" and assumed the functions of the ministry.

After the execution of the king, in the year 1649, the Independents gained the ascendency by means of the army, and through the abilities of Cromwell. One of the tenets of this sect was that "*any gifted brother*, if he find himself qualified thereto, may instruct, exhort, and preach in the church." The same year that George Fox was imprisoned at Derby, Cromwell at the head of a victorious army, asserted this doctrine in Scotland. The Presbyterian ministers at Edinburg, having objected to his "opening the pulpit doors to all intruders," he gave this decisive and memorable reply:

"We look on ministers as helpers of, not lords over, the faith of God's people: I appeal to the consciences, whether any denying of their doctrines, or dissenting from them, will not incur the censure of a sectary; and what is this but to deny christians their liberty, and assume the infallible chair? Where do you find in scripture that preaching is included [restricted] within your function? Though an approbation from men has order in it, and may be well, yet he that hath not a better than that, hath none at all.

"I hope he that ascended upon high may give his gifts to whom he pleases; and if those gifts be the seal of mission, are not you envious, though Eldad and Medad prophesy? You know who has bid us covet earnestly the best gifts, but chiefly that we may prophesy; which the apostle explains to

be a speaking to instruction, edification and comfort, which the instructed, edified, and comforted, can best tell the energy and effect of.

"Now if this be evidence, take heed you envy not for your own sakes, lest you be guilty of a greater fault than Moses reproved in Joshua when he envied for his sake. Indeed you err through mistake of the scriptures. Approbation is an act of convenience in respect of order, not of necessity, to give faculty to preach the gospel.

"Your pretended fear lest error should step in, is like the man that would keep all the wine out of the country, lest men should be drunk. It will be found an unjust and an unwise jealousy to deny a man the liberty he hath by nature, upon a supposition he may abuse it. When he doth abuse it then judge." *

"In 1653 the Parliament actually took into consideration the abolition of the clerical functions, as savoring of popery, and the taking away of tithes, which many of the members called a relic of Judaism.

"The Presbyterians were decidedly opposed to these views, but so strong was the feeling against the application of tithes for the clergy, that in a house of 111 members, 43 voted against such appropriation, although Cromwell in this instance threw the weight of his influence on the Presbyterian side." †

Soon after this, it appears that Independent and Presbyterian ministers, and even some Baptist preachers, "had got into the steeple-houses," and claimed the benefices attached to them.‡

During this unsettled period, it was not unusual for persons to propound theological questions to the minister during the time of divine service or after the sermon, and this practice led to religious disputes. Such was the case in the meeting at Leicester in 1648. In that instance the assembly met in

* Neal, II. 116. Whitelock, p. 458.

† Bowden's Hist. of Friends in America.

‡ George Fox's Journal, year 1655.

the parish house of worship, and was composed of four different sects, met for the purpose of religious disputation.

It is stated in a memoir of John Audland who was convinced of Friends' principles in 1652, that before his convincement, while yet a preacher among the Independents, he sometimes went to the chapels and parish houses of worship, where there were idle or dissolute priests, and though a dissenter, publicly preached to the auditory, which was often very large.

From these facts it is manifest that the primitive Friends, who occasionally spoke in the national places of worship, did no more than other dissenters were accustomed to do, and we may reasonably conclude that all religious persuasions might have claimed a right of common property in the steeple-houses, after the subversion of the Anglican Church, until it was re-established at the accession of Charles II.*

We shall find, as we proceed in the biography of George Fox, that his ministry in such places was often acceptable to the people, and even the priests sometimes offered him the pulpit. It has been supposed by some that he interrupted the ministers while they were preaching, but this was seldom, if ever, his practice. He waited until they had done, and then declared boldly the doctrines he felt bound to deliver; which being frequently directed against the mercenary character of the priests, called down upon him their utmost vengeance.

His imprisonment at Derby was not for disturbing a religious meeting; the offence stated in the mittimus was a charge of "uttering and broaching divers blasphemous opinions," which the magistrates alleged he had confessed before them. His religious opinions avowed on that occasion, having been stated in the preceding chapter, we have seen that, so far from being blasphemous, they were in strict accordance with the scriptures of truth, and the experience of good men in every age of the church. While in prison he wrote as

* There were numerous other religious meetings held in those times, but into none of these did Friends obtrude themselves: Bowden's Hist. I. 80.

follows to Colonel Barton, one of the magistrates who committed him:

"Friend:—Thou that preachest Christ and the scriptures in words. When any came to follow that which thou hast spoken of, and to live the life of the scriptures, those that preach the scriptures, but do not lead their lives according thereunto, persecute them. Mind the prophets, Jesus Christ and his apostles, and all the holy men of God; what they spoke was from the life: but they that had not the life, but the words, persecuted and imprisoned them that lived in the life, which those had backslidden from.

GEORGE FOX."

He wrote also to the Mayor of Derby and to the court which met there, stating that "drunkenness, swearing, pride and vanity, ruled among them, both in teacher and people," and admonishing them "to take heed of oppressing the poor, and of imposing false oaths upon the people, or making them take oaths which they could not perform."

This admonition was remarkably pertinent to the times, and applicable to all the public authorities of Great Britain.

Changes in the government had within a few years been frequent and radical; yet at every change the people were required to take oaths of allegiance inconsistent with their previous engagements. First, they had sworn allegiance to the King, as their sovereign, and supreme head of the Anglican Church: Secondly, they had sworn to the solemn league and covenant, in which they bound themselves to the extirpation of prelacy, that is church government by archbishops, bishops, &c.: Thirdly, they had taken the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth of England, as it was then "established without a King or House of Lords." And a few years later they took an oath to Cromwell as the Lord Protector.

The ill effects of these oaths upon the public morals were set forth in a pamphlet, written by a member of parliament,

one of the most voluminous writers of that day. The title of this singular work may aid in illustrating the state of the times, and is therefore subjoined: viz. "Concordia, Discors, or the Dissonant harmony of sacred Publique oaths, protestations, leagues, covenants, ingagements, lately taken by many time-serving saints, officers without scruple of conscience, making a very unpleasant *consort*, in the ears of our most faithful *oath-performing*, covenant-keeping God, and all loyal consciencious subjects, sufficient to create a doleful *Hell*, and tormenting horror in the awakened conscience of all those, who have taken and violated them too, successively, without any fear of God, men, devils, or hell." By William Prynne, Esq., Bachelor of Lincoln's Inne, 1659."

During the imprisonment of George Fox at Derby, many professors of religion came to converse with him. Some of these asserted that sin and imperfection must continue during the whole of this life. George asked them "whether they were believers and had faith? and in whom?" They answered, "yes, they had faith in Christ." He replied, "If ye are true believers in Christ, you are passed from death to life, and if passed from death, then from sin that bringeth death: and if your faith be true, it will give you victory over sin and the devil, purify your hearts and consciences, (for the true faith is held in a pure conscience) and bring you to please God and give you access to him again." But they could not endure to hear of purity and victory over sin and the devil. He then queried "whether they had hope?" They said, "yes, God forbid but we should have hope." He asked then, "what hope is that you have? Is Christ in you the hope of glory? Does it purify you as he is pure?" But they could not receive this doctrine, and he bade them "forbear talking of the scriptures which were the holy men's words, for the holy men who wrote the scriptures, pleaded for holiness in heart, life and conversation here; but since you plead for impurity and sin which is of the devil, what have you to do with the holy men's words?"

One day as he was walking in his chamber, he heard a doleful noise in the adjoining apartment, and standing still, he heard the jailor say: "Wife, I have seen the day of judgment, and I saw George there, and I was afraid of him; I had done him so much wrong, and spoken so much against him to the ministers and professors, and to the justices, and in taverns and ale-houses." This jailor, who was a high professor of religion, being now under strong convictions for the wrong he had done, came in the evening to his prisoner and said, "I have been as a lion against you, but now I come like a lamb, and like the jailer that came to Paul and Silas trembling." He asked permission of George to lodge with him, to which the latter replied. "I am in thy power, thou canst do what thou wilt." "Nay," said he, "I would have your leave, and I could desire to be always with you, but not to have you as a prisoner, for I and my house have been plagued for your sake." "So I suffered him," he writes in his Journal, "to lodge with me." "Then he told me all his heart, and said he believed what I had said of the true faith and hope to be true; and he wondered that the other man who was put in prison with me did not stand to it; and said 'that man was not right, but I was an honest man.' He confessed also to me, that at those times when I had asked him to let me go forth to speak the word of the Lord to the people, when he refused to let me go, and I laid the weight thereof upon him, that he used to be under great trouble, amazed, and almost distracted for some time after, and in such a condition that he had little strength left him. When the morning came he arose, and soon after went to the justices, and told them, 'that he and his house had been plagued for my sake.' One of the justices replied (as he reported to me) that the plagues were upon them too, for keeping me. This was justice Bennet of Derby, who was the first that called us Quakers, because I bid him tremble at the word of the Lord. This was in the year 1650."

After this interview with the jailor, the justices gave per-

mission for George to walk a mile, but he, perceiving their intention that he should make his escape clandestinely, replied, that he might sometimes take the liberty of walking, if they would prescribe to him exactly how far a mile extended. The jailor then confessed that their intention was to get rid of him by this means, but he told them "he was not of that spirit."

He was sometimes visited by the jailer's sister, a young woman in ill health. He spoke to her concerning the truths of religion, which so affected her, that she acknowledged "he and his friends were an innocent people, and did none any hurt, but did good to all, even to those who hated them," and she desired that they might be treated with kindness.

Being restrained from the privilege of visiting the meetings of Friends, he addressed them an epistle, from which the following passages are quoted:

"The Lord doth show unto man his thoughts, and discovereth all the secret workings in man.

"A man may be brought to see his evil thoughts, running mind, and vain imaginations, and may strive to keep them down, and to keep his mind in; but cannot overcome them, nor keep his mind within to the Lord. In this state and condition submit to the spirit of the Lord that shows them, and that will bring to wait upon the Lord; and he that hath discovered them will destroy them. Therefore stand in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, (who is the author of the true faith,) and mind him; for he will discover the root of lusts, evil thoughts, and vain imaginations; how they are begotten, conceived and bred, and how they are brought forth, and how every evil member doth work. He will discover every principle from its own nature and root." * * * "For there is peace in resting in the Lord Jesus. This is the narrow way that leads to him, the life; but few will abide in it. Keep in the innocency, and be obedient to the faith in him. Take heed of conforming to the world, and of reasoning with flesh

and blood, for that bringeth disobedience; and then imaginations and questionings arise to draw from obedience to the truth of Christ. But the obedience of faith destroyeth imaginations, questionings, and reasonings, with all the temptations in the flesh, buffetings, lookings forth, and fetching up things that are past. But, not keeping in the life and light, not crossing the corrupt will by the power of God, the evil nature grows up in man; then burdens will come and man will be stained with that nature.

"But Esau's mountain shall be laid waste, and become a wilderness, where the dragons lie; but Jacob, the second birth, shall be fruitful, and shall arise. For Esau is hated, and must not be lord; but Jacob, the second birth, which is perfect and plain, shall be lord; for he is beloved of God.

"GEORGE FOX." *

About the same time he wrote as follows to those who were convinced of Friends' principles:

"The Lord is king over all the earth!—therefore all people praise and glorify your king in true obedience, in uprightness, and in the beauty of holiness. Oh! consider, in true obedience, the Lord is known, and an understanding from him is received. Mark, and consider in silence, in lowliness of mind, and thou wilt hear the Lord speak unto thee in thy mind. His voice is sweet and pleasant; his sheep hear his voice, and will not hearken to another. When they hear his voice, they rejoice and are obedient; they also sing for joy. Oh, their hearts are filled with everlasting triumph! they sing, and praise the eternal God in Zion. Their joy, man shall never take from them. Glory to the Lord God for evermore!

GEORGE FOX."†

While he was in the house of correction in Derby, his relatives came to see him, and being grieved on account of his

* Fox's Journal, I. 47—49. † Ibid, 51.

imprisonment, they went to the justices by whom he was committed, and desired to have him at home with them, offering to be bound as sureties in the sum of £100; and others, in Derby, for £50 each, "*that he should come no more thither to declare against the priests.*"

Being brought before the magistrates for this purpose, he declined entering into such a recognizance "for his good behaviour," or having others bound for him, because he conceived it "would be a blemish upon his innocency."

Justice Bennet, hearing this, rose up in a great rage, and while George knelt down to pray the Lord to forgive them, the justice struck him with both his hands, crying, "Away with him, jailor; take him away, jailor." He was then remanded to prison, where he remained until the expiration of the six months for which he was committed.

Having permission to walk a mile by himself, he occasionally accepted the privilege. Sometimes he went into the markets and streets, preaching repentance to the people, and then returned to his prison again. He frequently wrote to the justices, expostulating with them for their cruelty.

One of his letters is here subjoined:

"FRIENDS:—Would you have me bound to my good behaviour, from drunkenness, or swearing, or fighting, or adultery, and the like? The Lord hath redeemed me from all these things; and the love of God hath brought me to loathe all wantonness, blessed be his name! Drunkards, fighters, and swearers have their liberty without bonds; and you lay your laws upon me, whom neither you nor any other can justly accuse of these things, praised be the Lord! I can look at no man for my liberty, but at the Lord alone, who hath all men's hearts in his hands.

GEORGE FOX."

To the priests of Derby he wrote as follows:

"FRIENDS:—You profess to be the ministers of Jesus Christ in words, but you show by your fruits what your ministry is.

Every tree shows its fruit: the ministry of Jesus Christ is in mercy and love, to loose them that are bound, to bring out of bondage and to let them that are captivated go free. Now, friends, where is your example, if the scriptures be your rule, to imprison for religion? Have you any command for it from Christ? If that were in you, which you profess, you would walk in their steps who spake the scriptures. But he is not a Jew who is one outward, whose praise is of men; but he is a Jew who is one inward, whose praise is of God.

But if you build upon the prophets and apostles in words, and pervert their life, remember the words which Jesus Christ spake against such. They that spoke the prophet's words but denied Christ, they professed a Christ to come, but had they known him they would not have crucified him. The saints whom the love of God did change, were brought thereby to walk in love and mercy; for he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God. But where envy, pride, and hatred rule, the nature of the world rules, not the nature of Jesus Christ. I write with no hatred to you, but that you may weigh yourselves, and see how you pass your time.

GEORGE FOX."

About this time he was visited in prison by a trooper, who stated that while he was seated in the steeple-house hearing the priest, great trouble fell upon him, and the voice of the Lord came to him, saying, "Dost thou not know that my servant is in prison? Go to him for direction." George then spoke to his condition, directing his attention to that inward power which shows man his sins, and will, if obeyed, take them away. The trooper was convinced of this doctrine, and advanced it boldly in his quarters among the soldiers. He said "his colonel was as blind as Nebuchadnezzar, to cast the Lord's servant into prison."

Upon this the Colonel conceived a dislike to him, and at the battle of Worcester, assigned him a post of great danger. Two soldiers from the royal army, having challenged any two

of the Parliament army to fight with them, this trooper, with another, was sent to meet them, and when, in the encounter, his companion was slain, he drove both his enemies within musket-shot of the town without firing a pistol at them.

This he related to George Fox when he returned, but "being sensible how wonderfully the Lord had preserved him, and seeing also the end of fighting, he laid down his arms."

A body of fresh troops being raised for the Parliament army, George Fox, whose term of imprisonment was nearly expired, was offered the captaincy over them; for the soldiers insisted on the command being assigned to him, saying they would serve under no other. He was therefore taken before the commissioners and soldiers in the market-place, where they offered him that preferment and asked him "if he would not take up arms for the commonwealth against Charles Stuart?"

He answered, "I know from whence all wars arise, even from the lusts, according to James's doctrine, but I live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of war."

Being further importuned to accept the offer, he added, "I am come into the covenant of peace which was before all wars and strifes."

They said the offer was made in love and kindness to him, but he replied, "If this is your love and kindness, I trample it under my feet."

The commissioners, being exasperated at his refusal, said, "Take him away, jailor, and put him into the prison among the rogues and felons." This cruel and illegal command being put into execution, he was confined among thirty felons, in a prison rendered loathsome by filth and vermin, where he was kept nearly half a year.

While in this dismal place, he was again visited by his relatives, who were concerned for him, and anxious for his release. Among others who came to see him was a soldier from Nottingham, who had been a Baptist. This person said to him, "Your faith stands in a man that died at Jerusalem,

and there never was any such thing." George being exceedingly grieved, said, "How! did not Christ suffer without the gates of Jerusalem, through the professing Jews, chief priests, and Pilate?" He denied that Christ ever suffered there outwardly. George asked him, "Whether there were not chief priests, and Jews, and Pilate there outwardly?" This not being denied, he added, "As certainly as a chief priest, and Jews, and Pilate were there outwardly, so certainly was Christ persecuted by them, and did suffer there outwardly under them." Yet from this conversation a slander was raised, that the Quakers denied Christ having suffered and died at Jerusalem.

In this time of his imprisonment, his mind was painfully exercised concerning the practice of putting men to death for larceny, under the penal code of England then in force. On this important subject he addressed the judges in the following letter:

"I am moved to write unto you, to take heed of putting men to death for stealing cattle or money, &c., for thieves in old time were to make restitution, and if they had not wherewith, they were to be sold for their theft. Mind the laws of God in the scriptures, and the spirit that gave them forth; let them be your rule in exercising judgment; and show mercy, that you may receive mercy from God, the judge of all. Take heed of gifts and rewards, and of pride; for God doth forbid them, and they blind the eyes of the wise. I do not write to give liberty to sin, God hath forbidden it; but that you should judge according to his laws, and show mercy; for he delighteth in true judgment, and in mercy. I beseech you mind these things, prize your time, now you have it; fear God and serve him, for he is a consuming fire.

GEORGE FOX."

Moreover, he "laid before the judges what an hurtful thing it was that prisoners should lie so long in jail, showing how they learned wickedness one of another, in talking of their

bad deeds; therefore, speedy justice should be done." These remarks, and his letter to the judges, are worthy of note, as the germ of that religious concern for prisoners and criminals, which, originating with George Fox and the primitive Friends, has grown and spread its influence over other minds, until, through the divine blessing, a melioration of the penal code, and a more humane treatment of criminals, has ensued throughout a large part of Christendom.

There was then in the jail at Derby, a young woman indicted for robbing her master. When her trial came on, George Fox wrote to the judges, showing them "how contrary it was to the law of God in old time to put people to death for stealing," and entreating them to show her mercy. Yet she was condemned to die, and a day was appointed for her execution. George then wrote a paper, to be read at the gallows, exhorting the people to prize their time, and to beware of covetousness, which leads the soul away from God. When she was ready to be turned off, a pardon was received, and she was remanded to prison, where she became convinced, and yielded to the influence of vital religion.

While George Fox lay in jail, Justice Bennet made another effort to place him in the army of Parliament, and having found that he would not accept a command, sent constables to press him into the service for a soldier. George told them, he "was brought off from outward wars." They offered him press-money repeatedly, but he declined. They then brought him again before the commissioners, but he still persisted in his refusal, upon which they were so incensed, that they committed him a "close prisoner, without bail or mainprize."

While thus confined among felons, in a foul and loathsome prison, he rejected every offer of deliverance which in the least compromised his principles; for his heart was given up to the divine service, and he felt assured that the Lord would in his own good time bring him forth.

In order to warn his friends against the "deceits of the

world," and to show "how the priests deceived the people," he issued the following paper:

"To all that love the Lord Jesus Christ with a pure and naked heart, and the generation of the righteous:—

"Christ was ever hated; and the righteous for his sake. Mind who they were that did ever hate them. He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit; so it is now. Mind who were the chiefest against Christ; even the great learned men, the heads of the people, the rulers and teachers, that professed the law and the prophets and looked for Christ. They looked for an outwardly-glorious Christ to hold up their outward glory; but Christ spoke against the works of the world, and against the priests, scribes and pharisees, and their hypocritical profession. He that is a stranger to Christ is an hireling; but the servants of Christ are freemen. False teachers always laid burdens upon the people; and the true servants of the Lord declared against them. Jeremiah spoke against hirelings, and said, 'It was an horrible thing; and what will ye do in the end?' for the people and priests were given to covetousness. Paul spoke against such as made gain upon the people, and exhorted the saints to turn away from such as were covetous and proud, such as loved pleasures more than God, such as had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof. 'For of this sort,' said he, 'are they that creep into houses and lead captive silly women; who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, and as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these resist the truth; but they shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men.' Moses forsook honours and pleasures which he might have enjoyed. The apostle, in his time, saw this corruption entering, which now is spread over the world; of having a form of godliness, but denying the power. Ask any of your teachers whether you may ever overcome your corruptions or sins? None of them believe that; but, 'as long as a man is

here, he must," say they, "carry about with him the body of sin." Thus pride is kept up, and that honour and mastership which Christ denied, and all unrighteousness. Yet multitudes of teachers! heaps of teachers! the golden cup full of abominations! Paul did not preach for wages, but laboured with his hands, that he might be an example to all that follow him.

O people, see who follow Paul! The prophet Jeremiah said, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means;" but now the priests bear rule, by the means they get from the people: take away their means, and they will bear rule over you no longer. They are such as the apostle said, "Intruded into those things which they never saw, being vainly puffed up with a fleshly mind;" and as the scriptures declare of some of old, "They go in the way of Cain who was a murderer, and in the way of Balaam who coveted the wages of unrighteousness." The prophet Micah also cried against the judges that "judged for reward, and the priests that taught for hire, and the prophets that prophesied for money; yet leaned on the Lord, saying, "Is not the Lord amongst us?"

Gifts blind the eyes of the wise. The gift of God was never purchased with money.

All the holy servants of God did ever cry against deceit; and where the Lord hath manifested his love they loathe it, and that nature which holdeth it up.

GEORGE FOX.

CHAPTER V.

Release from prison—Visits Litchfield—Passes through Nottinghamshire Derbyshire and Yorkshire — Convincement of R. Farnsworth — J. Naylor—and W. Dewsbury—Preaches at Beverly—Visits Justice Hotham—Consternation of a priest—Visits York-minster—Rudely treated—At Cleaveland meets with Ranters—Meeting at Malton—At Pickering—A clergyman convinced who travels with him—Passes through Patrington—Is apprehended—Searched by a Justice and set at liberty—Forgives his persecutors—Ascends Pendle-hill—A vision—Convincement of many in the Dales of Yorkshire.

1651.

One of the most remarkable traits in the character of George Fox, was his undeviating devotion to his sense of duty, whatever the consequences that might ensue. We have seen that, during his confinement in the foul and loathsome prison at Derby, he rejected every offer that involved the least compromise of his principles. It mattered not whether the proposal came from his relatives anxious to serve him, from the commissioners of the army proffering a post of honour, or from the magistrates threatening the most severe penalties. Compromise, that enervating word which expresses the time-serving policy of worldly minds, seems not to have entered into his thoughts. Placing his reliance upon the arm of Divine Power, he was strong through the determined purpose to do right; and amid the jeers, and the abuse, and the long imprisonments that attended him, he stood firm in the dignity of conscious innocence, which, at last, compelled the respect even of his enemies.

The magistrates of Derby, being conscious of the injustice they had done him, became exceedingly uneasy; and the longer he continued in prison, the more they were disturbed by the reproaches of that secret monitor, which pleads for justice and mercy even in the tyrant's breast, and will not be

silenced. At one time they thought of arraigning him before the Parliament; at another, they proposed to banish him to Ireland.

"At first," he says, "they called me a deceiver, a seducer, and a blasphemer. Afterwards, when God had brought his plagues upon them, they styled me an honest, virtuous man. But their good report and their bad report were nothing to me, for the one did not lift me up, nor the other cast me down. Praised be the Lord! At length, they were made to turn me out of jail, about the beginning of winter, in the year 1651, after I had been a prisoner in Derby almost a year; six months in the house of correction, and the rest of the time in the common jail and dungeon."

Being again at liberty, he went forward as before in the work of the ministry, passing through Leicestershire, and preaching the gospel of Christ.

On approaching the city of Lichfield, in Staffordshire, a very remarkable exercise attended his mind, and going through the streets without his shoes, he cried, "Wo to the bloody city of Lichfield." His feelings were deeply affected; for there seemed to be a channel of blood running down the streets, and the market-place appeared like a pool of blood. After leaving the city, he began to consider and inquire what could be the cause of this extraordinary exercise. Much blood had been shed there, during the civil wars, between the king and the parliament, but the same had also occurred in other places. At length, he was informed that during the reign of the Emperor Dioclesian, about one thousand Christians had been put to death in that place, from which it obtained its present name, signifying the field of dead bodies. He therefore attributed the exercise which came upon him, to the sense that was given him of the blood of the martyrs, whose memorial he was required to revive.

Proceeding on his way, he came through Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, into Yorkshire, and preached repentance to the people in Doncaster and other places. At Balby, he held

a meeting, at which some were convinced, among whom was Richard Farnsworth, afterwards extensively known as an able minister of the gospel.

At Wakefield, in the same county, he met with James Naylor and Thomas Goodyear, both of whom had recently been convinced of the principles of Friends.

At Lieutenant Roper's, near Balby, he held an evening meeting, and after it was closed, he walked forth by moonlight, into an orchard, where William Dewsbury and his wife came to him, seeking an interview.* These persons had, some time previously, been convinced through the immediate influence of divine grace; and now, being confirmed and encouraged by the ministry of George Fox, they joined in profession with him, and William Dewsbury became distinguished as a powerful minister of the gospel and a patient sufferer for the cause of truth. He was a prisoner in Warwick castle nineteen years for his religious principles, besides the imprisonments he suffered on that account in other places, yet he repined not, but cheerfully resigned himself to the Lord's will. About thirty-seven years after his convincement, he closed his useful and exemplary life in London, rejoicing in the evidence he felt of divine favour, and saying to those who attended him, "Friends, be faithful and trust to the Lord your God, for I can say I never played the coward, but as joyfully entered prisons as palaces, and in the prison-house I sang praises to my God, and esteemed the bolts and locks upon me as jewels."

As George Fox continued his journey, he stopped at many of the houses of the gentry, to admonish and exhort the people "to turn to the Lord," and coming to Beverly, he went to an inn to lodge and dry his clothes, which were very wet with rain. In the morning, being the first day of the week, he went to the parish house of worship, where, having waited till the minister had ended, he felt constrained from a sense

*Friends' Library, II. 232.

of duty to speak to him and to the people, turning their attention to Christ Jesus their spiritual teacher.

The power and authority of divine truth, under which he spoke, had a remarkable effect upon the people, and he passed on without molestation. In the afternoon, he went to another place of worship, about two miles distant, where, after waiting till the priest had done, he spoke to him and the people very largely, showing them the way of life and truth, and the ground of election and reprobation. The priest said he was but a child, and could not dispute. George replied, "I did not come to dispute, but to hold forth the word of life and truth unto you, that you may all know the one seed the promise of God is to, both in the male and the female." The congregation was very friendly, and desired him to come again on a week day and preach to them; but he, being desirous to call them off from a dependence upon man, directed them to their teacher Jesus Christ, who is "the true shepherd and bishop of souls."

The next day he went to Captain Pursloe's at Crantsick, who, being favorably inclined toward him, accompanied him on a visit to Justice Hotham. The Justice was a man of religious experience; and, after some serious discourse, he invited George into his closet or study, where he acknowledged that "he had known this principle for ten years, and he was glad that the Lord did now send his servants to publish it abroad to the people."

While he was staying at Justice Hotham's, a lady of rank called there on business, who, in conversation with the Justice, said, "The last Sabbath-day there came an angel or spirit into the church at Beverly, and spoke the wonderful things of God, to the astonishment of all that were there; and when it had done, it passed away, and they knew not whence it came, nor whither it went, but it astonished all — priests, professors, and magistrates." This evidently related to the visit of George Fox, and shows, not only the power of his ministry,

but the peculiar state of feeling then prevailing in the public mind.

On the following First-day, accompanied by Captain Pursloe, he attended a parish house of worship, where, after the usual service, he preached so effectually, that some were convinced, and a meeting of Friends was gathered in that place. In the afternoon, he went to another "steeple-house," where "preached a great high-priest called a doctor." This minister took for his text these words: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk, without money and without price." When the sermon was ended, George Fox said, "Come down, thou deceiver; dost thou bid people come freely, and take of the water of life freely, and yet thou takest three hundred pounds a year of them for preaching the scriptures to them? Mayst thou not blush for shame? Did the prophet Isaiah and Christ do so, who spoke the words, and gave them forth freely? Did not Christ say to his ministers, whom he sent to preach, 'Freely ye have received, freely give?'" The priest, like a man amazed, hasted away, and George Fox had a full opportunity to speak to the congregation, whom he directed to the grace of God, that would teach them, and bring them salvation, for the spirit of God revealed in the soul is a free teacher.

From this meeting, he returned to Justice Hotham's, who took him in his arms, saying, "My house is your house, I am exceeding glad at the work of the Lord, and that his power is revealed." He then explained why he did not go to the meeting, in the morning; being apprehensive, he said, that the officers might have required him to take some measures in relation to his guest, that would have brought him into difficulty.

On the first day of the next week, being at York, he was impressed with a sense of duty to visit the great Cathedral, called York-minster.

"Accordingly," he says, "I went. When the priest had

done, I told them I had something from the Lord God to speak to the priest and people." "Then say on quickly," said a professor, for it was frost and snow, and very cold weather. Then I told them, this was the word of the Lord God unto them, "that they lived in words, but God Almighty looked for fruits amongst them." As soon as the words were out of my mouth, they hurried me out and threw me down the steps. But I got up again without hurt, and went to my lodgings again, and several were convinced there."

From York, he went to Burraby, where many embraced his principles, and a meeting of Friends was settled. Thence he proceeded to Cleaveland, where he found a people who "had tasted of the power of God," having, formerly, great meetings, but now they were much shattered, and their leaders had become Ranters. He told them, that "after they had such meetings they did not wait upon God to feel his power to gather their minds inward, that they might feel his presence and power amongst them in their meetings, to sit down therein, and wait upon Him, for they *had spoken themselves dry*, they had spent their portions, *and not living in that they spoke of, they were now become dry*." He, therefore, advised that "they should all come together again, and wait to feel the Lord's power and spirit in themselves, to gather them to Christ, that they might be taught of him who says, 'Learn of me.' The heads or leaders among them came to nothing, but most of the people embraced the principles of Friends, and a good meeting was established there."

Although the snow was deep he continued to travel a-foot, and coming to Stath, he met with many professors of religion, and some Ranters, among whom he held meetings and a great number were convinced through his ministry. Among those who embraced his principles, one was a man a hundred years old, another a chief constable, and a third a clergyman named Philip Scafe. The latter became subsequently a minister of the gospel in the society of Friends.

The parish priest at Stath was exceedingly oppressive in

the collection of his tithes. When his parishioners went a-fishing many leagues off, he would exact the tithe-money of what they made of their fish, even though they were carried for sale as far as Yarmouth. George Fox felt constrained to go to the parish house of worship, to lay open the extortions of this priest, and to "declare truth to the people." When the oppressions of this mercenary teacher were exposed, he fled away, and George had a full opportunity to address the congregation.

His ministry took effect with some, who at night came to him, and being fully convinced, acknowledged the truth of his doctrine.

From this time forward, the principles of Friends began to spread in Yorkshire, and great meetings were held in which the gospel was preached freely. Not only the parish priests, but the Ranters, began to rage; and one of their leading men challenged George Fox to a public disputation. The challenge being accepted, a large company assembled, among whom were many of the Ranters, and a Scotch clergyman. In this meeting, George Fox, after having exposed the absurdities and impiety of the Ranters, whom he compared to the old Sodomites, turned upon the clergy, whom he proved to be of the same stamp as "the false prophets of old, and the priests that bore rule over the people, by their means, seeking their gain from their quarter, divining for money, and teaching for filthy lucre." The Scotch priest was highly incensed, and after the meeting, striking his cane upon the ground, he said to Philip Scafe, if ever he met with George Fox again, he would have his life, or Fox should have his; yet this man and his wife became afterwards convinced of the principles of Friends.

At another meeting, where George Fox was declaring that "The gospel was the power of God unto salvation,—that it brought life and immortality to light in men, and turned people from darkness to light;" a priest who was present, opposed him, saying that, "The gospel was mortal." Upon

this, Philip Scafe, who was formerly a clergyman, and had lately embraced the principles of Friends, took up the dispute, which he managed so well, that many more were convinced of the same principles. Another priest sent a challenge for a disputation with George Fox, who, with some of his friends, went to meet him; but when they drew near, the challenger fled from the house, and hid himself under a hedge.

The Friends then went to a neighbouring place of worship, where the priest had used threatening language against them, but, no sooner were they come, than he fled, and George Fox, being left in possession of the field, preached to the people who were eager to hear him. On this occasion he remarks in his Journal, that "It was a dreadful thing to the priests, when it was told them, 'The man in leathern breeches is come.'"

At Malton he had large meetings at private houses, but some of the people desired him to preach in the houses appointed for public worship. One of the priests invited him to occupy his pulpit, but he felt an objection to pulpits, "which the priests lolled in," as well as to the "steeple-houses," that were superstitiously regarded as holy places, and temples of the Lord. He found it his duty, however, at times, to visit them, in order to gather people from thence, teaching them that "God dwells not in temples made with hands," but in the hearts of his people.

Having gone to the parish house of worship, at Malton, two clergymen insisted upon his going into the pulpit, but he declined, saying, "He came not to uphold such places, nor their maintenance and trade." Being offended at this, they said, "These false prophets were to come in the last times." He then stepped upon a high seat, and declared to them the marks of the false prophets, showing that they were already come, and he directed the people to their inward teacher, Christ Jesus, who would turn them from darkness to light. At Pickering, he held a meeting in a school-house, near the parish house of worship, which was then occupied by the

justices holding their sessions, Justice Robinson being chairman.

The meeting at the school-house was large, being attended by a number of professors and clergymen, who asked many questions, which were answered to their satisfaction. Four chief constables, and many others, received the doctrines declared, and word was carried to Justice Robinson that his pastor, whom he esteemed above all others, was overthrown and convinced.

This clergyman, whose name was Boyes, wished to pay for George Fox's dinner at the inn, but he would by no means suffer it. He also offered his "steeple-house" for George to preach in; but the latter declined it, saying that he came to bring them off from such things to Christ.

The next morning he went, in company with four chief constables, and some others, to visit Justice Robinson, who met him at his chamber door. George told him he could not honour him with man's honour, and the justice replied, he did not expect it. They then went into his chamber, where George opened to him the state of the false prophets and of the true prophets, directing him to Christ, as an inward teacher. He explained to him the parables, and the ground of election and reprobation; showing that reprobation stands in the first birth, and election in the second birth.

The Justice acknowledged the truth of these doctrines, and wished to contribute something towards his travelling expenses while in the country; but George, after acknowledging his kindness, refused his money, and took leave of him.

For several days, he was accompanied by the clergyman who had been convinced at Pickering. While they halted for refreshment at a town, the bells rang, and George asked for what purpose they were rung. He was answered, that "it was for him to preach in the steeple-house."

Believing it right for him to go, he went thither, and was invited to enter and occupy the pulpit, but he stood up in the yard, and declared to the people that he came not to uphold

their idol-temples, nor their priests, nor their tithes, nor their Jewish and heathenish ceremonies and traditions; nor did he consider that ground more holy than any other piece of ground. He showed them, that the apostles going into Jewish synagogues and temples, which God had commanded, was to bring people off from that temple and those synagogues; and from the offerings, tithes, and covetous priests of that time: that such as were converted and believed in Christ met together in dwelling-houses; and that all who preach Christ the word of life, ought to preach freely, as the apostles did and as he commanded. He exhorted the congregation to come off from these things, directing them to the spirit and grace of God in themselves — the light of Jesus in their own hearts, that they might come to know Christ their free teacher to bring them salvation and to open the scriptures to them.

Still accompanied by the clergyman, he came to another town where a large company gathered around him, and he sat upon a hay-stack *several hours*, in silence, feeling it his duty "*to famish them from words.*"

While thus waiting, the people would frequently inquire of his companion; "When will he speak?" "When will he begin?" He bade them wait, and reminded them that the people waited upon Christ a long while before he spoke. At length, feeling the power of Divine life to arise, George Fox spoke in the authority of truth, and there was a general convincement among his auditors.

As they passed on their way, some of the people called to his companion, saying, "Mr. Boyes, we owe you some money for tithes, pray come aud take it." But he threw up his hands and said "he would have none of it," and "he praised God he had enough."

George Fox, having returned to Crantsick, called on Captain Pursloe and Justice Hotham, by whom he was gladly received and hospitably entertained. Justice Hotham said to him "If God had not raised up this principle of light and life which you preach, the nation had been overrun with Ranter-

ism, and all the Justices in the nation could not have stopped it, with all their laws, because they would have said as we said, and done as we commanded, and yet have kept their own principles still. But their principles are overthrown by this principle of Life and Truth; therefore I am glad the Lord has raised it up."

Leaving these hospitable friends, he travelled into Holderness, and thence to Oram, where he went to the "steeple-house, and, the priests having fled, he preached to the congregation with such unction and power, that many embraced his views and joined with him in religious fellowship. The next day, his friends and fellow travellers having left him, he went forward alone, still travelling a-foot. In the evening, having come to the town of Patrington, he walked through the streets exhorting both priests and people to repentance and amendment of life. When it grew dark, he went to an inn and asked for lodging, which was denied him: he then desired a little meat or milk, for which he offered to pay, but was refused. Passing out of the town, he asked for food and lodging at two other houses, but without success, for so great was the prejudice against him, that neither the promptings of humanity, nor the prospect of reward, could induce the people to entertain him. In this extremity, he satisfied his thirst with water from a ditch, and sat down among the furze-bushes to pass the night.

At break of day, he arose, but was soon after apprehended by a constable, attended by a band of armed men, who conducted him back to Patrington, where, the whole population being drawn together by the report of his arrest, he found another opportunity "to declare the word of life among them, and warn them to repent." At last, a citizen of the place, being moved with compassion, gave him some bread and milk, which was the first food he had eaten for some days. From that town he was sent, under a guard, about nine miles to a justice, who, on searching for letters, found him so well provided with changes of linen, that he declared he was no vagrant, and set him at liberty.

He immediately returned to Patrington, where he remained some days, and had large meetings. Many were convinced, and joined in profession with him, who deeply regretted that they did not receive him on his first entrance. The respect now shown him was, on the part of some, accompanied by a feeling of superstitious dread. This was evinced, soon after his return, by the conduct of his host, who desired him to go to bed, or at least to lie down upon a bed, in order to refute a report which was rife among the people, that he never slept upon a bed.

The person who had been the instigator of his arrest, came forward and asked his forgiveness, which he freely granted. A short time previously, being asked by Justice Hotham, who wished to protect him, whether any persons had meddled with him, or abused him, he declined giving any information on the subject, thus affording a practical illustration of that beautiful trait in the christian character—forgiveness of injuries. This trait was also evinced soon after, in his refusing to appear against the clerk of the parish at Ticknell, in Yorkshire, who, with many others, fell upon him in their house of worship and beat him in the face with their bibles until his blood gushed out upon the floor.

Notwithstanding the violent abuse and severe sufferings to which he was often subjected from the rude populace, instigated generally by the priests, he still held on his way, exhorting the people wherever he came to repentance and amendment of life. In most places some were found to receive his testimony, and he declared his belief that "if but one man or woman were raised up by the Lord's power to stand and live therein, as the prophets and apostles did, that man or woman would shake all the country in their profession for ten miles round."

Continuing his travels he came to Pendlehill, which, from a persuasion of duty, he ascended, but with great difficulty, it being very steep and high. From the summit he had a

wide prospect around, reaching to the Irish Sea on the coast of Lancashire.

"From the top of this hill," he says, "the Lord let me see in what places he had a great people to be gathered. As I went down, I found a spring of water in the side of the hill, with which I refreshed myself, having eaten or drunk but little for several days before."

At night, having come to an inn, he declared the truths of the gospel, and wrote a paper addressed to the priests and professors of religion. "It was here," he says in his Journal, "the Lord opened to me, and let me see a great people in white raiment, by a river-side, coming to serve the Lord. The place that I saw them in, was about Wentzerdale and Sedbergh."

The following day, accompanied by his friend Richard Farnsworth, he continued his journey, and at night they slept on a bed of fern spread upon the common.

Next morning, he parted with his companion and travelled alone through Wentzerdale, till he came to a town where there was a lecture on the market-day. Here he went to the parish house of worship, and when the priest had done, he "declared the day of the Lord, warning them to turn from darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might come to know God and Christ aright, and to receive his teaching who teaches freely."

Having spoken largely and freely without much opposition, he "passed up the dales, warning the people to fear God, and preaching the everlasting gospel." In this manner, he passed through Wentzerdale, Grysedale, and several other dales in the western part of Yorkshire, where many were convinced and continued steadfast in the faith.

In these dales, there were doubtless many serious and devout persons, of the class called "Seekers." Being dissatisfied with the forms of the Anglican Church, they had withdrawn from it, and were looking for a more spiritual religion, which they sought by inward retirement and secret prayer.

A company of these, who were separated from the public worship, being assembled at Justice Benson's near Sedberg in Yorkshire, George Fox attended and found great openness among them, for the reception of his doctrines. They were generally convinced, and a large meeting of Friends was settled through his ministry.

CHAPTER VI.

Meeting at Firbank chapel — Convincement of Francis Howgill, J. Camm, John and Ann Audland—Meetings at Kendal and Underbarrow—Convincement of E. Burrough—Swarthmore—Convincement of Margaret Fell and family, among whom were Thomas Salthouse, Wm. Caton, and Ann Clayton.

1652.

In the county of Westmoreland, near the picturesque lake Winandermere, stood, until recently, a venerable edifice called Firbank chapel. It was situated on an eminence commanding a wide prospect of barren moors, on which few habitations of man could be seen.* The country, at some distance around, was broken into hills and dales, where resided a rural population who worshipped at this place.

It was here that George Fox, in the spring of the year 1652, held one of the most memorable of all his meetings. He arrived at the chapel during the time of the morning service, on the first day of the week, when Francis Howgill and John Audland were officiating as ministers to a large congregation. They were classed among the Independents, and being sincere and earnest in their religious exercises, were held in high esteem by the people.

Seeing George Fox arrive, they quickly ended their services, for Francis, having heard him a few days previously, was favourably impressed with his doctrines. At the close of

* London Friend, 1851.

the morning meeting, the ministers and part of the congregation retired for dinner, but many remained at the chapel, and George Fox, having refreshed himself with water from a brook, returned and sat on the top of a rock contiguous to the chapel.

In the afternoon, the people gathered around him to the number of about a thousand, among whom were several of their preachers. Many old people, thinking it strange to see a man preach from the top of a rock, went into the chapel and gazed at him through the windows. For about the space of three hours, he preached the gospel "in demonstration of the spirit and of power," directing them to the spirit of God in themselves, by obedience to which they might become the children of light, and turned from Satan unto God. By this Spirit of Truth they would come to understand the words of the prophets, of Christ, and of the apostles, and they would experience Christ to be their teacher to instruct them, their counsellor to direct them, their shepherd to feed them, their bishop to oversee them, and their prophet to open divine mysteries unto them. Thus they would know their bodies to be sanctified and made fit temples for God and Christ to dwell in.

He explained to them the parables and sayings of Christ, the scope and intent of the apostles' writings, and the state of apostacy into which the church had fallen through the mercenary conduct of the priests. "The steeple-house," he told them, "and the ground whereon it stood, were no more holy than that mountain; and that those temples, which they called the dreadful houses of God, were not set up by the command of God and of Christ; nor their priests called, as Aaron's priesthood was; nor their tithes appointed by God, as those amongst the Jews were; but that Christ was come who ended both the temple and its worship, and the priests and their tithes; and all now should hearken to him; for he said, "Learn of me," and God said of him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

"I declared to them," he continues, "that the Lord God

had sent me to preach the everlasting gospel and word of life amongst them, and to bring them off from these temples, tithes, priests, and rudiments of the world, which had got up since the apostles' days, and had been set up by such as erred from the spirit and power that the apostles were in." "Very largely was I opened in this meeting; the Lord's convincing power accompanied my ministry, and reached home to the hearts of the people, whereby many were convinced, and all the teachers of that congregation (who were many) were convinced of God's everlasting truth."

Among the proselytes were Francis Howgill, John Camm, John Audland, and Ann his wife, (afterwards known as Ann Camm) all of whom became ministers of the gospel in the society of Friends. As they proved to be able coadjutors of George Fox, some notice of them may not be inappropriate in this place.

Francis Howgill received a collegiate education, in order to prepare him for the ministry in the Episcopal church. From his own account of his religious experience, it appears that, at twelve years of age, he set his heart to seek for the knowledge of God.* He associated with the strictest sort of professors, was assiduous in reading the scriptures, loved retirement, and resolved to avoid the sports and pastimes common to youth. But these resolutions, being made in his own will and strength, were often broken, which brought him into condemnation and deep distress.

At fifteen years of age, being earnestly desirous of spiritual knowledge, he frequented meetings, and followed the most renowned preachers: nevertheless, corruption still prevailed in his heart, but as "he kept within to the light in his conscience," he was restrained from gross evils, and condemned for sin. These convictions, he was assured by the ministers, proceeded from "a natural conscience;" and thus he was

* The inheritance of Jacob, discovered after his return out of Egypt, &c., by Francis Howgill. London Edition, 1656.

induced to undervalue the light, as "too low a thing, being only a common grace," whereas, he was told, the saints "had a peculiar faith and grace," to whom sin was not imputed, but believing in Christ, "his righteousness was accounted to them." They instructed him to believe that Christ had suffered the penalty of sin for him; but he could not see how Christ had taken away his sins, for the witness in his conscience told him, that while he continued in the practice of sinning, "he was the servant of sin."

He fasted, prayed, and walked mournfully in sorrow, being tempted on every hand, but "the witness of Christ showed him that the root of iniquity stood, and the body of sin remained." Then he was told, that although sin was taken away by Christ, yet the guilt of sin would remain through life, in proof of which, they adduced the warfare of the saints: but this he found was a "miserable salvation," and turning away from all such, he remained at home in solitude, finding most peace of mind when most affected with sorrow.

He then became acquainted with the Independents, and conceiving an esteem for them, he joined in communion with them. They professed separation from the world, but he found them, in doctrine and practice, like others whom he had forsaken. He next resorted to the Anabaptists, who appeared to walk more in accordance with the Scriptures, and there was something among them that he loved; but when he found them maintaining, that "All who came not into their way, were out of the fellowship of the saints, and the doctrine of Christ," he saw they occupied the same ground as the rest of the teachers in the world.

Some preached the doctrine that "all sin, past, present, and to come," was done away by Christ, and "so preached salvation to the first nature, and to the serpent that bore rule; only believing this, and all was finished;" but when he hearkened to this doctrine, he lost his spiritual condition, and the language was spoken to him, "His servant art thou, whom thou obeyest."

At length, having wandered much, and tried many teachers, he concluded that all these sought themselves, and fed the people on words only; he, therefore, withdrew from them, which caused them to persecute him.

Being persuaded, from an inward evidence, that the Lord would teach his people himself, he looked forward to the dawning of a brighter day; but, not waiting patiently for divine guidance, he attempted, by his own intellectual powers, to expound these openings, and went forth in his own strength, preaching against the ministry of others.

In this state, being sincere and zealous in his religious efforts, he was admired and followed by many; but when he heard the powerful, heart-searching ministry of George Fox, the secrets of his own heart were revealed, and standing as one condemned, he confessed that he had been "ignorant of the first principle of true religion."

Having passed through a season of deep mental suffering, he came to experience that spiritual baptism of Christ which purifies the soul, and to witness "cleansing by his blood, which is eternal." He was then called to be a true minister of the gospel, not according to the wisdom of man, but through the power of God. No sooner did he enter on this service, than priests and magistrates became incensed against him, and he was cast into prison. After his release, he went to London, being accompanied by Anthony Pearson, where they held a meeting, in 1654, which was the first meeting of Friends held in that city.* He laboured much, as an able minister of the gospel, and wrote several books in defence of his principles. Being imprisoned at Appleby for refusing to swear, he lay in jail five years, patiently suffering for the testimony of a pure conscience, and was then released by death.†

John Camm and John Audland were near neighbours, and closely united by the ties of friendship, as well as by the

* Sewel, I. 109. † Ibid, II. 164.

stronger bond of religious fellowship. They were men of respectable standing, endowed with good natural abilities, well educated, and remarkable for the rectitude of their lives. Before their acquaintance with George Fox, they had been deeply exercised on the subject of religion, and having, like Francis Howgill, withdrawn from the National Church, they officiated as Independent preachers at Firbank Chapel.

On being convinced at that memorable meeting, they joined in membership with Friends, and subsequently came forth as ministers of the free gospel of Christ. They were often associated in their religious labours, travelling together in great unity of spirit, and suffering together for the cause they had espoused. John Camm lived but four years after his convincement, during which he and John Audland were assiduously engaged in preaching the gospel. They frequently visited the city of Bristol, where great numbers were convinced through their ministry.

John Audland survived his friend seven years, and continued his religious labours. He was frequently imprisoned, and sometimes cruelly beaten for his religious testimony. In his last illness, being affected with a pulmonary disease, supposed to have been occasioned by much speaking; he said, "Ah! those great meetings in the orchard at Bristol! I may not forget them. I would so gladly have spread my net over all, and gathered all, that I forgot myself: never considering the inability of my body. But it is well!—my reward is with me, and I am content to give up and be with the Lord, for that my soul values above all things else."*

His widow, Ann Audland, after some years, married Thomas, a son of John Camm. She was a devoted minister of the gospel, and like her first husband, was made willing to sacrifice the comforts of home, and the endearments of domestic life, in order to follow in the footsteps of the Divine master.

It was to the house of John and Ann Audland, that George

* Friends' Library, V. 480.

Fox went immediately after his meeting at Firbank Chapel. His next meeting was at Preston Patrick, where a large congregation was assembled, to whom he preached the word of life with acceptance.

At Kendal, a meeting was appointed for him, in the Town-Hall, which he attended, and many were convinced of his doctrines.

From thence he went to Underbarrow, accompanied by several persons, with whom he had much reasoning by the way, concerning the truths of religion. Among them was Edward Burrough, a young man of bright talents, and well improved by education. He was religiously inclined from his youth, and by his parents was trained up in the Episcopal worship, but becoming dissatisfied therewith, he joined the Presbyterians. At seventeen years of age, he was brought under deep religious convictions, but although he abstained from the vanities and vices of the world, and endeavoured to live religiously, yet he did not obtain that peace of mind, and full assurance which he longed for, until, in conversation with George Fox, his understanding was opened to perceive the excellency of that inward life, which is "hid with Christ in God." He then joined himself in membership with Friends, for which he was rejected by his relatives, and expelled from his father's house. This he bore patiently, and taking up the cross of self-denial, he advanced in the knowledge of the truth, of which he became a devoted and eloquent minister; distinguished for his undaunted courage, his unwearied labours, and his meekness in suffering for the righteous cause.

At Underbarrow, a meeting was appointed for George Fox, to be held in the chapel, which he attended, and preached "the way of life and salvation" to a large congregation. Many were convinced, and among them an aged man named James Dickenson, who invited George to his house, and embraced the principles of Friends. At Cartmel, in Lancashire, he met with very different treatment, where the priest, being enraged, instigated the rude multitude to throw him over a

stone wall, but, through divine mercy, he received but little injury. Soon afterward, he came to Ulverston, and thence to Swarthmore, the residence of Thomas Fell, a judge of high standing, and vice-chancellor of the county of Lancashire.

The results of his ministry at this place are thus related in the "Testimony" or memorial concerning him, written by his widow, Margaret Fox, who was then the wife of Judge Fell: "In the year 1652, it pleased the Lord to draw him towards us; so he came on from Sedbur into Westmoreland, to Firbank Chapel, where John Blaykling came with him, and so on to Preston, Grarig, Kendal, Underbarrow, Poobank, Cartmel, and Stoveley, and so on to Swarthmore, my dwelling-house, whither he brought the blessed tidings of the everlasting gospel, which I and many hundreds in these parts have cause to bless the Lord for. My then husband, Thomas Fell, was not at home at that time, but gone to the Welch circuit, being one of the judges of the assize; and our house being a place open to entertain ministers and religious people at, one of George Fox's friends brought him thither, where he staid all night; and the next day being a lecture or fast-day, he went to Ulverston steeple-house, but came not in till the people were gathered; I and my children being a long time there before. And when they were singing before the sermon, he came in; and when they had done singing, he stood upon a seat or form, and desired 'that he might have liberty to speak;' and he that was in the pulpit said he might.

"And the first words he spoke were as followeth: 'He is not a Jew that is one outward, neither is that circumcision which is outward, but he is a Jew that is one inward, and that is circumcision which is of the heart.'

"And so he went on and said that Christ was the light of the world, and lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and that by this light they might be gathered to God, &c. I stood up in my pew and wondered at his doctrine, for I had never heard such before.

"And then he went on and opened the scriptures and said,

'the scriptures were the prophets' words, and Christ's and the apostles' words, and what, as they spoke, they enjoyed and possessed, and had it from the Lord:' and said, 'then what had any to do with the scriptures, but as they came to the spirit that gave them forth? You will say, Christ saith this, and the apostles say this; but what canst thou say? Art thou a child of light and hast walked in the light, and what thou speakest, is it inwardly from God?' &c.

"This opened me so, that it cut me to the heart; and then I saw clearly we were all wrong. So I sat down in my pew again, and cried bitterly; and cried in my spirit to the Lord, 'we are all thieves, we are all thieves, we have taken the scriptures in words, and know nothing of them in ourselves.' So that served me, that I cannot well tell what he spoke afterwards; but he went on in declaring against the false prophets, priests, and deceivers of the people. And there was one John Sawrey, a justice of the peace, and a professor, that bid the churchwarden take him away; and he laid his hands on him several times, and took them off again, and let him alone, and then after a while he gave over and came to our house again that night. And he spoke in the family amongst the servants, and they were all generally convinced; as William Caton, Thomas Salthouse, Mary Askew, Anne Clayton, and several other servants. And I was struck into such a sadness, I knew not what to do, my husband being from home. I saw it was the truth and I could not deny it; and I did as the apostle saith, 'I received the truth in the love of it:' and it was opened to me so clear, that I had never a tittle in my heart against it, but I desired the Lord that I might be kept in it, and then I desired no greater portion.

"He went on to Dalton, Aldingham, and Dendrum, and Ramsyde chapels and steeple-houses, and several places up and down, and the people followed him mightily: and abundance were convinced, and saw that which he spoke was truth, but the priests were all in a rage. And about two weeks after, James Naylor and Richard Farnesworth followed him

and enquired him out till they came to Swarthmore, and there staid awhile with me at our house, and did me much good; for I was under great heaviness and judgment. But the power of the Lord entered upon me within about three weeks that he came, and about three weeks' end my husband came home; and many were in a mighty rage, and a deal of the captains and great ones of the country went to meet my then husband as he was coming home, and informed him 'that a great disaster was befallen amongst his family, and that they were witches; and that they had taken us out of our religion; and that he must either send them away, or all the country would be undone.' But no weapons formed against the Lord shall prosper, as you may see hereafter.

"So my husband came home greatly offended; and any may think what a condition I was like to be in, that either I must displease my husband or offend God, for he was very much troubled with us all in the house and family, they had so prepossessed him against us. But James Naylor and Richard Farnesworth were both then at our house, and I desired them to come and speak to him; and so they did very moderately and wisely: but he was at first displeased with them, till they told him "they came in love and good-will to his house." And after that he had heard them speak awhile he was better satisfied, and they offered as if they would go away; but I desired them to stay, and not to go away yet, for George Fox would come this evening. And I would have had my husband to have heard them all and satisfied himself further about them, because they had so prepossessed him against them of such dangerous fearful things in his coming first home. And then he was pretty moderate and quiet, and his dinner being ready he went to it, and I went in and sate me down by him. And whilst I was sitting, the power of the Lord seized upon me, and he was struck with amazement, and knew not what to think, but was quiet and still. And the children were all quiet and still, and grown sober and could

not play on their music that they were learning, and all these things made him quiet and still.

"At night, George Fox came; and after supper, my husband was sitting in the parlour, and I asked him 'if George Fox might come in?' And he said, 'Yes.' So George came in without any compliment, and walked into the room, and began to speak presently; and the family and James Naylor and Richard Farnesworth came all in; and he spoke very excellently as ever I heard him, and opened Christ's and the apostles' practices, which they were in, in their day. And he opened the night of the apostacy since the apostles' days, and laid open the priests and their practices in the apostacy; that if all in England had been there, I thought they could not have denied the truth of those things. And so my husband came to see clearly the truth of what he spoke, and was very quiet that night, said no more, and went to bed. The next morning came Lampit, priest of Ulverston, and got my husband into the garden, and spoke much to him there; but my husband had seen so much the night before that the priest got little entrance upon him. And when the priest Lampit was come into the house, George spoke sharply to him, and asked him, "When God spoke to him and called him to go and preach to the people?" But after a while the priest went away; this was on the sixth day of the week, about the fifth month, 1652. And at our house divers Friends were speaking one to another, how there were several convinced hereaways, and we could not tell where to get a meeting; my husband also being present, he overheard, and said of his own accord, 'You may meet here if you will;' and that was the first meeting we had that he offered of his own accord. And then notice was given that day and the next to Friends, and there was a good large meeting the first day, which was the first meeting that was at Swarthmore, and so continued there a meeting from 1652 to 1690. And my husband went that day to the steeple-house, and none with him but his clerk and his groom, that rode with him; and the priest and the people

were all fearfully troubled; but, praised be the Lord, they never got their wills upon us to this day." *

Although Judge Fell did not coincide with the other members of his family, in openly embracing the principles of Friends, yet he was well affected towards them, used his authority for their protection, and for several years before his death ceased to attend the national worship. Meetings continued to be held at his house until a meeting-house was erected there.

Swarthmore, being much frequented by George Fox and his Friends, became noted as their head-quarters, in Lancashire. The number of these guests was so great that the judge, though much inclined to hospitality, became somewhat alarmed. Coming home one day, he found his shed filled with Friends' horses, which, by his wife's orders, had been removed thither, to make room in the stables for her husband's horses. He remarked, that he feared they would be eaten out by this continual influx of company. She pleasantly replied, that "Charity doth not impoverish, and she fully believed that when the year was at an end, they would have no cause to regret their hospitality." This opinion was fully verified by the result, for that year their stock of hay was not only sufficient for themselves, but they had a large surplus to sell.†

Among those convinced by the ministry of George Fox, in the family of Judge Fell, were Thomas Salthouse, William Caton, and Ann Clayton, all of whom became ministers in the Society of Friends.

Thomas Salthouse, during a period of thirty-eight years, was an active labourer in his master's cause, and after suffering frequent imprisonments and much abuse, which he bore with christian patience, he laid down his head in peace.

William Caton, when he first met with George Fox, was a youth who had not yet left school, but was well advanced in his studies. As his mind became more deeply impressed with

* M. Fox's Testimony, Journal of George Fox. † Sewel, I. 104.

religious concern, his Latin exercises became burdensome to him, and he could not give the master of the school the usual compliments which were required. Being thus brought into a strait, Margaret Fell obtained for him the privilege of remaining at home, where he was employed in writing, and teaching her children.

When about 17 years of age, being earnestly devoted to his religious duties, he felt himself called to preach repentance to the people, at markets, and other places of public resort, for which he was often rewarded with opprobrium and abuse. At 18 years of age, he took leave of Judge Fell's family, and visited his friends in the northern counties of England. Afterwards he came to London, where he was well received by the Friends, and being of a persuasive address, he found an opening among others for the exercise of his gift in the ministry. He travelled much in the service of the gospel, in England, Scotland, France, and more especially in Holland, where he died in the year 1665, having been instrumental in bringing many to the knowledge of heavenly truth.

During one of the visits of George Fox at Swarthmore, he met with four or five clergymen. He thus relates the conversation that ensued: I asked them, "Whether any one of them could say he ever had the word of the Lord, to go and speak to such and such a people?" None of them durst say he had; but one of them burst into a passion and said, "He could speak his experiences as well as I." "I told him experience was one thing; but to receive and go with a message, and to have a word from the Lord, as the prophets and apostles had, and as I had had to them, was another thing. And therefore I put it to them again. "Could any one of them say, he ever had a command or word from the Lord, immediately at any time?" But none of them could say so. Then I told them, the false prophets, false apostles, and anti-christs, could use the words of the true prophets, true apostles, and of Christ, and would speak of other men's experiences, though themselves never knew nor heard the voice of God and Christ:

and such as they might get the good words and experiencees of others."* * * *

"At another time, when I was discoursing with several priests at Judge Fell's house, and he was by, I asked them the same questions, "Whether any of them ever heard the voice of God, or of Christ to bid them go to such or such a people, to declare his word or message unto them?" for any one, I told them, that could but read, might declare the experiences of the prophets and apostles, which were recorded in the scriptures. Hereupon Thomas Taylor, an ancient priest, did ingenuously confess before Judge Fell, "that he had never heard the voice of God, nor of Christ to send him to any people, but he spoke his experiences, and the experiences of the saints in former ages, and that he preached. This very much confirmed Judge Fell in the persuasion 'that the priests were wrong;' for he had thought formerly, as the generality of people then did, "That they were sent from God."

CHAPTER VII.

Able coadjutors of George Fox—Several clergymen convinced—The clergy instigate persecution—At Ulverstone George Fox is abused by the people—His wonderful recovery—His conversation with a soldier—He and James Naylor cruelly beaten at Walney—Judge Fell issues warrants to apprehend the rioters—Magnanimity of George Fox—At Lancaster assizes he contends with the priest—Is victorious—Epistle of George Fox.

1652.

George Fox now found himself supported by a number of faithful and able coadjutors, men of respectable standing in society,—noted for their intelligence and moral worth, who became willing to suffer contumely, reproach, imprisonment, and death for "the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ." In addition to those already mentioned, may be

noted the names of Leonard Fell of Becliff, a brother of the judge; Thomas Lawson, clergyman of Ramside, Thomas Taylor a clergyman, his brother Christopher Taylor, Richard Hubberthorn, Miles Halhead, and Robert Widders.

Most of these became ministers in the society of Friends, and many meetings were settled in Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Lancashire, Durham, and Cumberland. A number of clergymen who were convinced of the principles of Friends, being afterwards called to a free gospel ministry, not only renounced the arrears due them for their clerical services, but in some instances refunded, as far as they were able, the compensation formerly received.

Thomas Taylor was convinced during the conversation which he and other clergymen had with George Fox, in the presence of Judge Fell, at Swarthmore. George relates in his journal, that Thomas travelled with him into Westmoreland. "Coming to Crossland steeple-house," he says, "we found the people gathered: and the Lord opened Thomas Taylor's mouth, (though he was convinced but the day before) so that he declared amongst them 'how he had been before he was convinced,' and, like the good scribe converted to the kingdom, he brought forth things new and old to the people, and showed them 'how the priests were out of the way,' which fretted the priest. Some little discourse I had with them, but they fled away; and a precious meeting there was, wherein the Lord's power was over all, and the people were directed to the spirit of God, by which they might come to know God and Christ, and to understand the scriptures aright. After this I passed on, visiting Friends, and had very large meetings in Westmoreland."

On his return to Lancashire, the same year, he went to the house of Lampit, the priest of Ulverstone, where he found many of the priests and professors, with whom he had much controversy concerning Christ and the scriptures. He remarks, that "The Lord's power went over the heads of them all, and his word of life was held forth amongst them; though

many of them were exceeding envious and devilish." "Yet after this, many priests and professors came to me from far and near. Those that were innocent and simple-minded were satisfied, and went away refreshed; but the fat and full were fed with judgment, and sent away empty: for that was the word of the Lord to be divided unto them."

When Friends' meetings were established, and they met in private houses, Lampit became exasperated, and said, "They forsook the temple, and went to Jeroboam's calves-houses." Hereupon George Fox explained the matter to the people, showing that the old mass-houses, which were set up in the darkness of popery, and were since occupied by the Protestants, were more like Jeroboam's calves-houses; for the primitive Christians, who often met in private houses, were told that "their bodies were the temples of God, and the believers were the church, which Christ was the head of. So that Christ was not called the head of an old house, which was made by men's hands, neither did he come to purchase, sanctify, and redeem with his blood, an old house, which they called the church, but the people which he is the head of."

The doctrines of George Fox being in direct opposition to the whole system of priestly domination, soon drew upon him the vengeance of the clergy, who instigated the magistrates and people to a severe persecution.

Having come to Ulverstone, he went on a lecture-day to the parish house of worship, and he thus relates in his Journal the scene that ensued: "I went near to priest Lampit, who was blustering on in his preaching. After the Lord had opened my mouth to speak, John Sawry, the justice, came to me and said, 'If I would speak according to the scriptures, I should speak.' I admired at him for speaking so to me, and told him I would speak according to the scriptures, and bring the scriptures to prove what I had to say; for I had something to speak to Lampit and to them. Then he said, I should not speak; contradicting himself, who had said just before, 'I should speak if I would speak according to the scriptures.'

The people were quiet, and heard me gladly, till this Justice Sawry (who was the first stirrer-up of cruel persecution in the north) incensed them against me, and set them on to hale, beat and abuse me. But now on a sudden the people were in a rage, and fell upon me in the steeple-house before his face, knocked me down, kicked me, and trampled upon me. So great was the uproar, that some tumbled over their seats for fear. At last he came and took me from the people, led me out of the steeple-house and put me into the hands of the constables and other officers; bidding them whip me, and put me out of the town. They led me about a quarter of a mile, some taking hold of my collar, some by my arms and shoulders, who shook and dragged me along. Many friendly people being come to the market, and some to the steeple-house to hear me, divers of these they knocked down also, and broke their heads, so that the blood ran down from several; and Judge Fell's son running after to see what they would do with me, they threw him into a ditch of water, some of them crying, 'Knock the teeth out of his head.' When they had haled me to the common moss side, a multitude following, the constables and other officers gave me some blows over my back with their willow rods, and thrust me among the rude multitude, who, having furnished themselves with staves, hedge-stakes, holm or holly bushes, fell upon me and beat me on my head, arms and shoulders till they had deprived me of sense, so that I fell down upon the wet common.

"When I recovered again, and found myself lying upon a watery common, and the people standing about me, I lay still a little while, and the power of the Lord sprang through me, and the eternal refreshings revived me; so that I stood up again in the strengthening power of the eternal God, and stretching out my arms amongst them, I said, with a loud voice, 'Strike again, here are my arms, my head, and my cheeks.' There was in the company a mason, a professor, but a rude fellow, who, with his walking rule-staff, gave me a blow

with all his might just over the back of my hand as it was stretched out; with which blow my hand was so bruised, and my arm so benumbed, that I could not draw it to me again; so that some of the people cried, 'He hath spoiled his hand forever.' But I looked at it in the love of God, (for I was in the love of God to all that persecuted me,) and after a while the Lord's power sprang through me again, and through my hand and arm, so that in a moment I recovered strength in my hand and arm in the sight of them all."

This barbarous treatment, being borne with Christian meekness, induced a feeling of sympathy on the part of some, so that the crowd began to differ among themselves; and George Fox, after "declaring the word of life to the people, and showing them that their unchristian conduct was the fruit of their priests' false ministry, passed on his way to Ulverstone market. As he went, he was met by a soldier with a sword by his side, who said, "Sir, I see you are a man, and I am ashamed and grieved that you should be thus abused." This soldier, seeing the market-people abusing some Friends, endeavoured to arrest it, and stepped in among them with his naked rapier; but George Fox, being apprehensive that mischief would ensue, requested him to put up his sword and go with him. Some days after, several men fell upon the soldier and beat him cruelly, for the part he had taken in protecting the Friends.

When George Fox, in a suffering condition, arrived at Swarthmore Hall, he found the Friends there busily engaged in dressing the wounds of others who had been with him at Ulverstone.

About two weeks afterwards, accompanied by James Naylor he went to Walney, a small island in the Irish Sea, near the coast of Lancashire. Before leaving the main-land, they staid one night at the little town of Cocken, where they had a meeting, which was disturbed by a man with a pistol, who snapped it at George Fox, but it would not go off. George reproved

the intruder, speaking to him with gospel authority, which caused him to tremble and leave the apartment.

Next morning, they went in a boat to James Lancaster's, who appears to have been a Friend residing on the island. On landing, George Fox was immediately assailed by about forty men, provided with staves, clubs, and fishing-poles, who knocked him down and stunned him so that he fell into a swoon. When he revived, he saw James Lancaster's wife throwing stones at his face, and her husband lying over him to protect him. The deluded woman had been persuaded by the people that her husband was bewitched by George Fox, and they had promised her that they would put him to death if she would only inform them when he came thither. At length he got upon his feet and reached the boat, which James Lancaster entered soon after and took him back to the main land. On arriving at Cocken, the people met him with pitch-forks, flails and staves, to keep him out of the town, crying, 'Kill him, knock him on the head, bring the cart and carry him away to the church-yard!' After they had driven him some distance from the town, they left him.

In the mean time, James Naylor, having walked into a field, was also attacked by the people of Walney, who fell upon him with great violence, crying, 'Kill him! kill him!' James Lancaster immediately returned for him with the boat, and George Fox, having washed himself at a ditch, walked three miles to Thomas Hutton's, where lodged Thomas Lawson, a clergyman who had been convinced of Friends' principles. George could scarcely speak, but he succeeded in making them acquainted with the peril of James Naylor, for whom they immediately went with horses, and brought him that night.

The next day Margaret Fell, hearing of the condition of George Fox, sent a horse for him, but so sorely was he bruised, that not without great suffering could he reach Swarthmore. The two persecuting justices, Sawry and Thompson, granted a warrant against him; but Judge Fell, who had been absent, having now returned home, prevented its execution and sent

warrants into the Isle of Walney to apprehend the rioters. Some of them fled from the country, and others repented of the evil they had done: among the latter was the wife of James Lancaster, who was afterwards convinced of the principles of Friends.

Judge Fell desired George Fox to give him a relation of the persecution he had suffered, but George declined to give the information, saying, "They could do no otherwise in the spirit wherein they were, and that they manifested the fruits of their priest's ministry." The judge afterward remarked to his wife that "George Fox spoke of it as a man that was not concerned."

Notwithstanding these sufferings to which he was subjected, the priests and their adherents were not yet satisfied, and having marshalled all their forces, they determined to prosecute him at the Lancaster assizes. He, being aware that the warrant issued against him by the justices Sawry and Thompson, was still in force, though not yet served upon him, concluded to attend the assizes and meet his accusers face to face. He went in company with Judge Fell, who remarked to him by the way, that he never had such a case brought before him, and knew not how to dispose of it.

"When Paul was brought before the rulers," said George, "and the Jews and priests came down to accuse him, and laid many false things to his charge, Paul stood still all that while. When they had done, Festus, the governor, and king Agrippa, beckoned to him to speak for himself, which Paul did, and cleared himself of all those accusations; and so mayst thou do by me."

When he arrived at Lancaster, he found about forty clergymen arrayed against him. They had chosen for their orator, Marshall, one of their own order, and had provided, as witnesses, a young priest and two clergymen's sons, who had taken their oaths that he had spoken blasphemy. When the court examined these men, they were so confounded that they soon proved themselves to be false witnesses. One of them

having been questioned, they began to examine a second, who became confused, and being at a loss, answered that "the other could say it." "What," said the judge, "have you sworn it, and given it in already upon oath, and now say that he can say it? It seems that you did not hear those words spoken yourself, though you have sworn it." There were, in court, several men of integrity and good reputation, who had been at the meeting where the blasphemous expressions were alleged to have been spoken, but they, on the contrary, testified that no such words were spoken by George Fox, and that the accusation was altogether false. Then Col. West, a justice of the peace, being on the bench, turned to George Fox, and said, "George, if thou hast anything to say, thou mayst freely declare it."

Being thus called upon, and impelled also by a sense of religious duty, he declared, "That the holy scriptures were given forth by the Spirit of God, and all people must first come to the Spirit of God in themselves, by which they might know God and Christ, of whom the prophets and apostles learnt; and by the same spirit know the holy scriptures; for, as the Spirit of God was in them that gave forth the scriptures, so the same spirit must be in all them that came to understand the scriptures. By which spirit they might have fellowship with the Father, with the Son, with the scriptures, and with one another; and without this spirit, they can know neither God, Christ, nor the scriptures, nor have a right fellowship one with another."

No sooner had he begun to speak than Marshall, the clerical orator, left the court; and when the defence was concluded, some others of the priests expressed their anger in unbecoming language. One of them, whose name was Jackus, said that the spirit and the letter were inseparable. George Fox replied, "Then every one that hath the letter, hath the spirit, and they might buy the spirit with the letter of the scriptures." This induced Judge Fell and Colonel West to reprove them sharply, saying, "According to that position, they might carry the spirit in their pockets, as they did the scriptures."

The judges, seeing that the witnesses for the prosecution did not agree, and being convinced that the accusation sprang from malice, discharged George Fox, and granted a supersedeas to stop the execution of the warrant that had been issued against him.

This was considered a great triumph over the priests. "Multitudes of people," says George Fox, in his Journal, "praised God, that day, for it was a joyful day to many. Justice Benson, of Westmoreland, was convinced; and Major Ripan, mayor of the town of Lancaster, also." "It was a day of everlasting salvation to hundreds of people; for the Lord Jesus Christ, the way to the Father, the free teacher, was exalted and set up; his everlasting gospel was preached, and the word of eternal life was declared over the heads of priests, and all such lucrative preachers. For the Lord opened many mouths that day to speak his word to the priests, and several friendly people and professors reproved them in their inns, and in the streets, so that they fell, like an old rotten house; and the cry was among the people, that the Quakers had got the day, and the priests were fallen. Many were convinced that day, amongst whom Thomas Briggs was one, who before had been so averse to Friends and truth, that, discoursing with John Lawson, a Friend, concerning perfection, Thomas said to him, 'Dost thou hold perfection?' and lifted up his hand to give the Friend a box on the ear. But Thomas being convinced of the truth that day, declared against his own priest Jackus; and afterward became a faithful minister of the gospel, and stood to the end of his days."

The priests, though discomfited, were not subdued; they determined to renew the attack, and having gained the assistance of some persecuting justices, they informed Judge Windham against him. At the following assize, this judge made a speech, in open court, against George Fox, and commanded Colonel West, who was clerk of the assize, to issue a warrant for his apprehension. The clerk assured the judge that George was innocent, and spoke boldly in his defence.

The judge replied by commanding him to write the warrant, or leave his seat, but he refused to comply, saying, "He would offer up his whole estate, and his body also, for George Fox." The resolute behaviour of Colonel West arrested the proceedings in this case, although George Fox, hearing of the intended prosecution, had again come to Lancaster, to meet his accusers. On his arrival, he went immediately to the chambers of Judge Fell and Colonel West. The Colonel met him with a smile, and said, "What! are you come into the dragon's mouth?"

In order to excite the populace against him, his adversaries raised and propagated the most absurd reports: as for example, "That neither water would drown him, nor could blood be drawn from him, and therefore he must be a witch." "But the Lord's power," he says, "carried me over all their slanderous tongues, and bloody, murderous spirits; who had the ground of witchcraft in themselves, which kept them from coming to God and to Christ."

Throughout these oppressive proceedings, instigated chiefly by a mercenary priesthood, who were alarmed by the desertion of their hearers, George Fox maintained his innocence and manifested his meekness. He did not attribute his deliverance to his own abilities, but to the protecting power and providence of God, who sent him forth on his mission of love as a lamb among wolves, but nevertheless stood near to deliver him from the hand of the spoiler.

About this time, he wrote many epistles, which are yet extant in his works.

Two of them are addressed to his adversaries, justice Sawry and priest Lampit, expostulating with them for their wicked conduct, and anti-christian spirit: two are directed to the people of Ulverstone, exhorting them to prize their time and turn to Christ the light of the world; and most of the others are addressed to those who had been convinced through his ministry.

Some selections from these epistles "To Friends," are here

subjoined. The first appears to have been intended to guard them, against the false doctrine of the Ranters, who held, that believers in Christ are justified, even while living in unrighteousness.

"FRIENDS:—No one is justified, breaking the commands of Christ; no one is justified, living in iniquity; and no one is justified in professing only Christ's words, and the prophets' and apostles' words, and living out of their lives: and no one is justified living in the first birth and nature, and false faith and hope, which doth not purify, as God is pure. No man is justified not believing in the light, as Christ commands, but with the light is condemned; for the light is the condemnation of all that walk contrary to it: therefore the power of God, mind. No man is justified acting contrary to the spirit which doth convince them.

GEORGE FOX.*

The next epistle evidently refers to the warlike spirit then prevailing, even among the professors of religion, and points out the peaceable nature of the Redeemer's kingdom.

"FRIENDS:—That which is set up by the sword, is held up by the sword; and that which is set up by spiritual weapons, is held up by spiritual weapons, and not by carnal weapons. The peace-maker hath the kingdom, and is in it; and hath the dominion over the peace-breaker, to calm him in the power of God. "And Friends, let the waves break over your heads. There is rising a new and living way out of the North, which makes the nations like waters. 'Hurt not the vines nor the oil,' nor such as know that 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' The days of virtue, love and peace, are come and coming, and the Lamb had and hath the kings of the earth to war withal, who will overcome with the sword of the spirit, the word of his mouth; for the Lamb shall have the victory. . . . .

GEORGE FOX.†

* George Fox's Works, Vol. VII. p. 19. † Ibid. Vol. VII. p. 20.

'To the Church of God in Lancashire.

FRIENDS:—Every one in particular, who are of God and not of the world, walk out of the world's vain customs, ordinances and commands; and stand a witness against them all, in the testimony of Jesus, and witness him the substance of all, waiting in the light of God, and walking in it, then will ye have unity one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse you of all sin; for through it and by it we do overcome; which blood of the new covenant is but one. There shall ye witness the Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world. Oh! wait all, in that which is pure, to be fed alone of God, with the eternal living food! Go not out among the swine, who feed upon the outside, the husk, among the merchants of Babylon, and so forsake the living bread; but as ye have received Christ Jesus, in him walk, that ye may all honour the Lord Jesus Christ, and adorn his gospel. And be famous in his light, and bold in his strength, which will carry you above the world, and above all the deceits of it. Oh, in love watch over one another for good, and for the better and not for the worse! And dwell in that which is pure of God in you, lest your thoughts get forth; and then evil thoughts get up, and surmising one against another, which ariseth out of the veiled mind, which darkens the pure discerning. But as ye dwell in that which is of God, it guides you up out of the elementary life, and out of the mortal into the immortal, (which is hid from all the fleshly ones) where is peace and joy eternal, to all that can witness the new birth. Babes in Christ, born again of the immortal seed, in it wait, my life is with you in perfect unity; bow down to nothing but the Lord God. Satan would have had Christ to have bowed down, but he would not; the same seed now, the same birth born in you now, which is the same to-day, yesterday and forever. The tempter will come to you; and if you look forth and hearken to his words, and let them in, then ye bow down under him, and worship him. But I say unto you, and charge you in the presence of the Lord, mind the pure seed of God in you, and

the mighty power of God, will cherish you up to the Lord God above all the temptations, not to bow down to any thing; but feeding upon the immortal food, ye will feel yourselves supported, and carried over him by your Father and your God, who is over all blessed forever! Who is the virtue of all creatures, the wisdom of all things; all holy praises be unto the holy glorious Lord God forever!

GEORGE FOX.*

CHAPTER VIII.

Prediction concerning the Long Parliament—Views on Prophecy and Miracles—Convincement of A. Pearson—Letter from him—Journey to Cumberland—Controversy with a Priest—Meetings at Cockermouth, Bingham, and Carlisle—Imprisonment of George Fox at Carlisle—Is beaten by the Jailor—Sings while beaten—Challenge to his persecutor—Cromwell's Parliament—Liberation of George Fox—Convincement of J. Parnel and John Stubbs—Ministry of John Stubbs and S. Fisher—Their visit to Rome—George Fox on Perfection—His account of Friends' prosperity—Convincement of George Whitehead and John Burnyeat.

1653.

GEORGE FOX, in the spring of 1653, after visiting the meetings of Friends in Lancashire, returned to Swarthmore. About this time he writes in his Journal, "Great openings I had from the Lord, not only of divine and spiritual matters, but also of outward things relating to the civil government. Being one day at Swarthmore Hall, when Judge Fell and Justice Benson were talking of the news, and of the parliament then sitting, (called the long-parliament,) I was moved to tell them, 'Before that day two weeks the parliament should be broken up and the speaker plucked out of his chair;' and that day two weeks, Justice Benson told Judge Fell that now he saw George was a true prophet; for Oliver had broken up the parliament."

* George Fox's Works, Vol. VII. p. 23.

It is possible that a doubt may arise in some minds concerning such premonitions or prophecies. To such minds the following considerations are offered for serious reflection:

It is a fundamental principle in christian doctrine, that God makes known his will to man through the impressions of his grace or spirit in the soul, and the experience of the wise and good in all ages proves that the mind becomes increasingly susceptible of divine impressions in proportion to its obedience and progress in the spiritual life. It is further admitted by all christians that the omniscience of God includes the knowledge of future events. Why then should it be thought unreasonable that he should at times, and for special purposes, communicate a portion of this knowledge to his servants?

The remarkable fulfilment of scripture prophecies proves conclusively that such divine communications have been made to men in former ages. But it is objected, that prophecy has ceased since the apostolic age. What evidence have we of this? Do not nearly all Protestants acknowledge that the prediction of John Huss, concerning the Reformation, was a true prophecy? And are there not many well-authenticated cases of remarkable premonitions which can be explained on no other principle than as the effect of a divine influence?

Another common objection is founded on the many false prophecies and pretended miracles by which mankind have been deceived. This, however, does not militate against the belief that there have been true prophecies and real miracles; on the contrary, it supports this doctrine, in like manner as the circulation of counterfeit money leads to the conclusion that there is, or has been, genuine coin in existence. It may not be inappropriate in this place to advert briefly to some remarkable cases of divine interposition related in the Journal of George Fox. One of them is mentioned in the third chapter of this work, where it is stated that, being moved to pray for a sick man, who had been given up by his physician, "the Lord was entreated, and restored him to health." Another case is related in chapter VII., where George Fox being

cruelly beaten, so as to endanger the use of his arm and hand, he was, through divine power, wonderfully restored. A third instance is thus related in his Journal in the year 1653: "About this time I was in a fast for about ten days, my spirit being greatly exercised on Truth's behalf, for James Milner and Richard Myer went out into imaginations, and a company followed them. This James Milner and some of his company had true openings at first; but getting up into pride and exaltation of spirit, they ran out from the truth. I was sent for to them, and was moved of the Lord to go and show them their outgoings; and they were brought to see their folly, and condemned it, and came into the truth again. After some time, I went to a meeting at Arnside, where Richard Myer was, who had been long lame of one of his arms. I was moved of the Lord to say unto him, amongst all the people, 'Stand up upon thy legs,' for he was sitting down; and he stood up, and stretched out his arm that had been lame a long time, and said, 'Be it known unto you, all people, that this day I am healed.' Yet his parents could hardly believe it; but after the meeting was done, led him aside, took off his doublet, and then saw it was true. He came, soon after, to Swarthmore meeting, and there declared how the Lord had healed him." *

If we admit that holy men in any age of the world have been made instruments in the divine hand for the performance

* Note.—A remarkable case of healing is related in George Fox's Journal, in the year 1683, vol. II. p. 308. James Claypole, of London, being at Worminghurst, the residence of William Penn, was taken violently with a fit of the stone, to which he was subject. George Fox went to him, and after speaking "a few words to turn his mind inward," was moved to lay his hand upon him, and pray the Lord to rebuke his infirmity. As his hand was laid on him, the power of the Lord went through him; and by faith in that power, he had speedy ease, so that he quickly fell into a sleep. When he awaked, the stone came from him like dirt, and the next day he travelled twenty-five miles, although in such attacks he usually lay some weeks.

of such cures, there appears no sufficient reason to doubt that George Fox was so influenced on these occasions.

There is abundant evidence that his mind was enlightened by divine grace, and his heart imbued with the love of God in a most extraordinary degree. He was the pioneer in almost all the moral reforms that have since claimed the attention of enlightened minds throughout christendom.* Being raised up and fitted for a great work among men, it is not unreasonable to believe that he would be furnished by Infinite Goodness with a clearness of spiritual vision, and a measure of the divine anointing, commensurate with the importance of his mission.

But it is objected against all miracles, that they are contrary to the laws of nature, and that any suspension or abrogation of those laws, would be an evidence of imperfection in the order established by Infinite Wisdom. To this it may be replied, that our knowledge of the laws of nature, though far more extensive than that of the ancients, is yet exceedingly limited, when compared with the vast amount that is still unknown.

These laws are deduced from a certain order or succession of causes and effects, many of which are hidden from human researches, and it is impossible to assign any limits to the effects of divine grace and power, operating through a soul fully devoted to the service of God.

Matter is inert; it cannot put itself in motion, and when in motion, cannot cease to move without a cause. All motion, and all life, are the results of power, originally proceeding from the Divine Mind. He can endue the minds of his servants with such a measure of his power, as will conduce to his own purposes, even though it be to control the elements.

The propagation of heavenly truth, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, are objects of immeasurable importance. Involving, as they do, the salvation of millions of immortal souls, they are of more consequence than all the changes of material things. Is it then incredible to any, that Divine

* See Dissertation on Testimonies, at the end of this volume.

Goodness should have so far condescended to the weakness of his creatures, as to empower his servants, at certain great epochs in the history of the world, to work miracles for the confirmation of their missions and the advancement of truth?

About this time George Fox, being at Colonel West's, went by invitation to Swarthmore Hall, to meet Anthony Pearson, a justice of the peace, who had been an opposer of Friends. The interview was effectual: his mind was reached by the Lord's power, and he became a valuable member of the Society. The following letter, without an address, was written by him soon after his convincement, and has been preserved among the Swarthmore papers:*

"Dear Friend:—I have long professed to serve and worship the true God, and as I thought, above many sects, attained to a high pitch in religion; but now, alas! I find my work will not abide the fire. My notions were swelling vanities, without power or life: what it was to love enemies, to bless them that curse, to render good for evil, to use the world as using it not, to lay down life for the brethren, I never understood; what purity and perfection meant, I never tasted; all my religion was but the hearing of the ear, the believing and talking of a God and Christ in Heaven, or a place at a distance, I knew not where. Oh! how gracious was the Lord to me in carrying me to Judge Fell's, to see the wonders of his power and wisdom; a family walking in the fear of the Lord, conversing daily with him, crucified to the world, and living only to God. I was so confounded, all my knowledge and wisdom became folly; my mouth was stopped, my conscience convinced, and the secrets of my heart were made manifest, and that Lord was discovered to be near, whom I ignorantly worshipped. I could have talked of Christ in the saints, the hope of glory, but it was a riddle to me. And truly, dear friend, I must tell thee, I have now lost all my religion, and am in such distress, I have no hope nor foundation left. My justification and assurance have forsaken me,

* Barclay's Letters of early Friends, No. III.

and I am even like a poor shattered vessel, tossed to and fro, without a pilot or rudder, as blind, dead, and helpless, as thou canst imagine. I never felt corruption so strong, and temptation so prevailing, as now; I have a proud, hard, flinty heart, that cannot be sensible of my misery. When I deeply consider how much precious time I have wasted, and how unprofitably I have lived, my spirit feels a sudden fear; but then I am still flying to my old refuge, and there my thoughts are diverted. What it means to wait upon God, I cannot apprehend; and the confusions in my own spirit, together with the continual temptations from without, are so great, I cannot understand or perceive the still, small voice of the Lord. What thou told me of George Fox, I found true: when thou seest him or James Nayler—they both know my condition better than myself—move them, if neither of them be drawn this way, to help me with their counsel by letter; they are full of pity and compassion, and though I was their enemy, they are my friends: and so is Francis Howgill, from whom I received a letter full of tenderness and wholesome advice. Oh! how welcome would the faces of any of them be to me; truly, I think I could scorn the world, to have fellowship with them. But I find my heart is full of deceit, and I exceedingly fear to be beguiled, as I have been, and to be seduced into a form without power, into a profession before I possess the truth; which will multiply my misery, and deprive me of both God and the world. * * * * I have been at Judge Fell's, and have been informed from that precious soul, his consort, in some measure, what those things mean, which before I counted the overflowings of giddy brains. Dear heart, pity and pray for me; and let all obligations of former friendship be discharged in well wishes to the soul of the old family friend, that he may partake with them of your heavenly possessions.

ANTHONY PEARSON."

Ramshaw, near West Auckland,
May 9th, 1653.

Accompanied by his wife, he went with George Fox some distance on his journey to Cumberland, until they came to the town of Bootle. At this place, on the First-day of the week, George went to the parish house of worship, where, after the minister had done, he began to speak; but the people were exceedingly rude, and beat him severely.

In the afternoon he went again, when he found the minister had obtained the assistance of another clergyman, of high repute, from London. The latter was preaching, and in order to throw odium upon Friends, he recited and applied to them all the texts he could think of, which spoke of false prophets, antichrists, and deceivers. When he had ended, George Fox recalled all those texts, and brought them to bear upon the clergy. Then the people fell upon him in a rude manner, but a constable who was present restrained them. The priest, being exasperated, said he should not preach.

GEORGE FOX. "Thou hast thy hour-glass, by which thou hast preached, and now, having done, the time is free for me, as well as for thee; for thou art but a stranger here thyself. Those scriptures which speak of the false prophets, antichrists, and deceivers, describe you and your generation, who are walking in their footsteps, and bringing forth their fruits; but they do not apply to us, who are not guilty of such things."

PRIEST. "This man has gotten all the honest men and women in Lancashire to him, and now he comes here to do the same."

GEORGE FOX. "What wilt thou have left? And what have the priests left them, but such as themselves? For if they be the honest that receive the truth, and are turned to Christ, then they must be the dishonest that follow thee, and such as thou art." Then turning to some who were pleading for the priest, and for tithes, he added, "It were better for you to plead for Christ, who has ended the tithing priesthood with the tithes, and has sent forth his ministers to give freely, as they have received freely."

He next proceeded to appoint a meeting near Cockermouth, at a place of worship, occupied by John Wilkinson, who was a clergyman in great repute, and had three parishes under his care. A great crowd was in attendance, and when George Fox arrived, he found his friend James Lancaster preaching to the congregation under a yew-tree, which was so full of people that it appeared likely to break down. George was asked whether he would not go into the church? Seeing no place so convenient, he answered "yes;" whereupon the people rushed in and filled the house. He followed them, and after they became settled, he stood upon a seat, and preached to them for about three hours, "laying open their teachers, with the rudiments, traditions, and inventions they had been under in the night of apostacy, since the apostles' days, and directing them to Christ, the true teacher and to the true spiritual worship."

After he had ended, the people appeared well satisfied, and one of them, a professor of religion, followed him and praised him so highly, that George, being disgusted, turned to him and said, "Fear the Lord!" A clergyman named Larkham being present, said to him, "Sir, why do you judge so? You must not judge!" George Fox replied, "Friend, dost thou not discern an exhortation from a judgment? I admonished him to fear God! and dost thou say I judged him?"

At Bringham, about two miles distant from the place of worship last named, was another occupied by the same clergyman. To this place he came and found a great concourse of people, many of whom had been at the other meeting. Being again asked whether he would not go into the church? he went in and stood upon a seat, to address a crowded auditory. He says in his Journal, "the Lord opened my mouth, and I declared his everlasting truth and word of life to the people, directing them to the spirit of God in themselves, by which they might know God, Christ, and the scriptures, and come to have heavenly fellowship in the spirit. I declared to them, that every one that cometh into the world was enlightened by

Christ the life, by which light they might see their sins, and Christ, who was come to save them from their sins, and died for them. And if they came to walk in this light, they might therein see Christ to be the author of their faith, and the finisher thereof; their shepherd to feed them, their priest to teach them, their great prophet to open divine mysteries unto them, and to be always present with them. I explained also to them, in the openings of the Lord, the first covenant, showing them the figures, and the substance of those figures; bringing them on to Christ, the new covenant. I also manifested to them, that there had been a night of apostacy since the apostles' days; but that now the everlasting gospel was preached again, which brought life and immortality to light: and the day of the Lord was come, and Christ was come to teach his people himself, by his light, grace, power, and spirit. A fine opportunity the Lord gave me to preach truth that day for about three hours, and all was quiet. Many hundreds were convinced, and some of them praised God, and said, "Now we know the first step to peace."

Proceeding on his journey, he came to Carlisle, where he had a meeting in the Abbey, which was attended by the pastor of the Baptists with most of his congregation.

Many of the audience, including some soldiers, were convinced of the truths declared. "After the meeting," he says, "the pastor of the Baptists, a high notionist and a flashy man, asked me 'what must be damned!' I was moved immediately to tell him, 'that which spoke in him was to be damned.' This stopped his mouth, and the witness of God was raised up in him. I opened to him the states of election and reprobation; so that he said 'he never heard the like in his life.' He came afterwards to be convinced.

"Then I went to the castle among the soldiers, who beat a drum and called the garrison together. I preached the truth amongst them, directing them to the Lord Jesus Christ to be their teacher and to the measure of his spirit in themselves, by which they might be turned from darkness to light and from

the power of Satan unto God. I warned them all that they should do no violence to any man, but should show forth a christian life; telling them that he who was to be their teacher, would be their condemner if they were disobedient to him.' So I left them, having no opposition from any of them, except the serjeants, who afterwards came to be convinced."

He next preached at the market-cross to a great concourse of people, by whom he was heard willingly. The magistrates had threatened that he should be arrested, and their wives had declared that they would pluck the hair from off his head if he came there, but so great was the crowd of people and soldiers around him, that they could not reach him.

It is highly probable that his long hair was one cause of offence among the Independents and Presbyterians, for the political party to which they belonged, wore their hair cropped short, and hence they were known by the appellation of Round-heads. George Fox informs us in his Journal, that "his hair was pretty long, for he was not to cut it, though many were offended at it. But he told them he had no pride in it, and it was not of his own putting on." He probably wore it as a sign to the highly professing Puritans, to signify, that there is no evidence of true religion in the cut of the hair, for they placed too much reliance upon this outward mark of sanctity.

On the following First-day, he visited the "steeple-house," where after the minister had done, he began to preach. The priest left the house, and the magistrates desired him to depart, but he told them he came to declare the way of the Lord to them, and so powerful was his ministry, that the people began to tremble, and some of them thought the house itself was shaken. The same magistrates' wives being present, were much exasperated, and strove to attack him, but could not reach him for the crowd. At length, the rude populace raised a riot, which was quelled by the soldiers, some of whom took him by the hand in a friendly manner, and conducted him away. A lieutenant who had been convinced of his principles

took him to his house, where he found a Baptist meeting, and some of his friends having joined him, they had a very satisfactory opportunity for divine worship.

The next day, the justices and magistrates of the town, being assembled in the Town-Hall, issued a warrant for his apprehension. On hearing of it, he immediately presented himself before them. Finding many strange and false accusations had been made against him, he had much discourse with them, and laid open the fruits of their priest's ministry, showing that with all their high professions, they were void of true christianity.

After a long examination, they committed him to prison as "a blasphemer, a heretic, and a seducer." The report now went abroad that he was to be hanged, and the Sheriff said he would himself guard him to execution. People came to see him, as a man condemned to die. Among them were several ladies of rank, and many priests. Some of the latter he says, "were exceedingly rude and devilish."

While he was closely confined and guarded in the jailor's house, his friends being denied access to him, Anthony Pearson, on his behalf, addressed a letter to the judges, complaining that he was not brought to trial, nor confronted with his accusers, and asserting that he was not guilty of any of the expressions or opinions charged against him. The judges, however, paid no attention to this petition, but left him to be dealt with by the magistrates, who ordered the jailor to put him down among the felons, which he did accordingly.

In this noisome, filthy place, surrounded by depraved men and women, he was persecuted by a brutal under-jailor, who beat him with a cudgel. "While thus beaten," he says in his Journal, "I was moved to sing in the Lord's power, which made him rage the more. Then he fetched a fiddler and set him to play, thinking to vex me, but while he played, I was moved in the everlasting power of the Lord God to sing, and my voice drowned the noise of the fiddler, and made them give over fiddling, and go on their way."

During his imprisonment, great sympathy was manifested for him by his friends. Justice Benson's wife was impelled by a sense of duty to visit him, and to "eat no meat but what she eat with him, at the bars of his prison window." Even the felons, among whom he was imprisoned, were so wrought upon by his christian demeanour, that they evinced their love and respect for him, and some of them became sincere penitents.

Notwithstanding his close confinement, he found means to issue several papers in defence of his principles. The first was a challenge to his accusers and persecutors, desiring all who were not satisfied with his doctrines, "to publish their objections in writing, and not backbite, lie and persecute in secret." Another was a letter addressed to the magistrates of Carlisle, remonstrating with them for their cruel and illegal proceedings, which he attributed to the instigation of the priests. He queries with them, "Is this the end of your ministry? Is this the end of your church, and of your profession of christianity? You have shamed it by your folly, madness and blind zeal. Was it not always the work of the blind guides, watchmen, leaders and false prophets, to prepare war against them, that could not put into their mouths? Have not you been the priest's pack-horses and executioners? When they spur you up to bear the sword against the just, do you not run on against those that cannot hold up such as the scriptures always testified against? Yet will you lift up your unholy hands, and call upon God with your polluted lips, and pretend a fast, who are full of strife and debate. Did your hearts never burn within you? Did you never come to question your conditions? Are you wholly given up to do the devil's lusts, to persecute? Where is your loving enemies? Where is your entertaining strangers? Where is your overcoming evil with good?". . . .

At length, his friend Anthony Pearson prevailed on the Governor of the castle, to go with him to inspect the prison. They found the place so extremely filthy and offensive, that

"They cried shame upon the magistrates, for suffering the jailor to do such things." They summoned all the jailors into the prison, and required them to find sureties for their good behaviour; and the under-jailor, who had been so cruel, they put into the prison among the felons.

About this time, Cromwell called together a new Parliament nominated by himself, with the advice of his council of officers, and chosen from among his own partisans. This body continued in existence only about six months, but during its session a report having reached London, that a young man at Carlisle was to die for religion, the Parliament caused a letter to be sent to the magistrates concerning him. It was probably in consequence of this inquiry, that George Fox was soon after liberated by the justices, who were conscious that his detention was illegal. His imprisonment was not without important results. One of his proselytes at this time was James Parnel, "a little lad of sixteen years of age," who soon became eminent as a minister of the gospel. Another was John Stubbs, then a soldier in Cromwell's army.

He had received a liberal education, being skilled, not only in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but also in the Oriental languages.* Soon after his convincement, Cromwell, having attained to supreme authority, required the army to take the oath of fidelity, which he, and some others, were not willing to take, because they could not swear at all, and hence they were allowed to retire from the service. The same year, in company with William Caton, he travelled in the service of the gospel. They held meetings in London, and visited many places in Kent, where they were instrumental in making some proselytes, among whom was Samuel Fisher, a learned Baptist minister. He had a benefice worth £200 pounds a year, which he relinquished, and joined in membership with Friends: he became an author of religious works, and a free minister of the gospel.

---

* Sewel, I. 108.

Some years later, John Stubbs, in company with Samuel Fisher, visited Rome, where they spoke with some of the cardinals, testified against the popish superstitions, and even distributed Friends' books among the friars, without being seriously molested. John Stubbs appears to have been an extensive traveller. He visited Scotland, Holland, Turkey, Egypt, and America, in the service of the gospel.

No sooner was George Fox released from prison at Carlisle, than he resumed his travels and labours in the ministry, and after visiting the counties of Westmoreland, Durham, and Northumberland, he returned to Cumberland. "In Northumberland," he says, "many came to dispute. Some pleaded against perfection, to whom I declared, 'That Adam and Eve were perfect before they fell; and that all God made was perfect; and that the imperfection came by the devil and the fall: but Christ, who came to destroy the devil, said, Be ye perfect.' One of the professors alleged that Job said, 'Shall mortal man be more pure than his maker? The heavens are not clean in his sight. God charged his angels with folly.' I showed him his mistake, and let him see, 'It was not Job that said so, but one of those that contended against him; for Job stood for perfection, and held his integrity; and they were called miserable comforters.' These professors said, 'The outward body was the body of death and sin.' I discovered their mistake in that also, showing them, 'That Adam and Eve had each of them an outward body, before the body of death and sin got into them; and that man and woman will have bodies, when the body of sin and death is put off again; when they are renewed up into the image of God again by Christ Jesus, which they were in before they fell.' They ceased at that time from opposing, and glorious meetings we had in the Lord's power."

In Cumberland, he attended a great meeting of thousands of people, on the top of a hill near Langlands. In describing it, he says, "A glorious heavenly meeting it was, for the glory of the Lord did shine over all; and there was as many as one

could well speak over. Their eyes were turned to Christ, their teacher; and they came to sit under their own vine; insomuch that Francis Howgill, coming afterwards to visit them, found they had no need of words; for they were sitting under their teacher Jesus Christ, in the sense whereof he sat down amongst them, without speaking anything. A great convincement there was in Cumberland, Bishoprick, Durham, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Lancashire, and Yorkshire; and the plants of God grew and flourished, the heavenly rain descending, and God's glory shining upon them: many mouths were opened by the Lord to his praise; yea, to babes and sucklings he ordained strength." * * * *

"About this time the priests and professors fell to prophesying against us afresh. They had said, long before, 'That we should be destroyed within a month;' after that, they prolonged the time to half a year: but that time being long expired, and we mightily increased in number, they now gave out, 'That we would eat out one another.' For after meetings, many tender people, having a great way to go, tarried at Friends' houses by the way, and sometimes more than there were beds to lodge in; so that some have laid on the haymows: hereupon fear possessed the professors and world's people. For they were afraid, that when we had eaten one another out, we would all come to be maintained by the parishes, and be chargeable to them. But after awhile, when they saw that the Lord blessed and increased Friends, as he did Abraham, both in the field and in the basket, at their goings forth and comings in, at their risings up and lyings down, and that all things prospered with them; then they saw the falsehood of all their prophecies against us, and that it was in vain to curse where God had blessed. At the first convincement, when Friends could not put off their hats to people, nor say You to a single person, but Thou and Thee; or could not bow, nor use flattering words in salutations, nor go into the fashions and customs of the world; many Friends that were tradesmen lost their customers; for the people were

shy of them, and would not trade with them; so that, for a time, some could hardly get money enough to buy bread. But afterwards, when people came to have experience of Friends' honesty and faithfulness, and found that their Yea was Yea, and their Nay was Nay; that they kept to a word in their dealings, and that they would not cozen and cheat them; but that if they sent a child to their shops for anything, they were as well used as if they had come themselves; the lives and conversations of Friends did preach, and reached to the witness of God in the people. Then things altered so, that all the inquiry was, 'Where was a draper, or shop-keeper, or tailor, or shoemaker, or any other tradesman, that was a Quaker? Insomuch that Friends had more business than many of their neighbors; and if there was any trading, they had a great part of it. Then the envious professors altered their note, and began to cry out, 'If we let these Quakers alone, they will take the trade of the nation out of our hands.' This hath been the Lord's doings to and for his people! which my desire is, that all who profess his holy truth, may be truly kept sensible of, and that all may be preserved in and by his power and spirit, faithful to God and man: first to God, in obeying him in all things; and then in doing unto all men that which is just and righteous, in all things that they have to do or deal with them in: that the Lord God may be glorified in their practising truth, holiness, godliness, and righteousness amongst people, in their lives and conversations."

It was during this year, (1653,) that George Fox, in an evening meeting at Sunny-Bank, in Westmoreland, became instrumental in confirming the faith of George Whitehead, whose mind had, some months before, been convinced of the principles of Friends. He was then but seventeen years of age, yet in the following year he came forth in the ministry of the gospel. His communications were at first in a few words only, but as he waited in silence and attended faithfully to the openings of divine truth upon his mind, he grew in his gift, and became an able and devoted minister of the Word.

He afterwards resided in London, where he was eminently serviceable, not only in his public ministry, but in the administration of church discipline, and in waiting upon persons in authority, to obtain relief for his suffering brethren.

Another proselyte to the doctrine of Friends, who was this year convinced by the ministry of George Fox, was John Burnyeat, of Cumberland. He belonged to Pardsay meeting, and was probably one of the many hundreds convinced at some of the meetings held in the open air at Pardshaw-crag. This is a rocky eminence which overlooks a natural amphitheatre, in one of the most secluded and picturesque regions of Cumberland. Tradition still preserves among the neighbouring inhabitants an account of the immense gatherings at this place in the days of George Fox, and of the wonderful effect produced upon them by his powerful and persuasive ministry.* They acknowledged him to be a chosen instrument "sent amongst them in the power of the Most High, filled with the strength of his word, in the wisdom whereof he directed thousands unto the light and appearance of Christ Jesus their saviour, in their own hearts." † By attention to this "law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus," John Burnyeat came to see the emptiness of his former high profession, and the danger of depending upon the imputed righteousness of Christ, while the body of death and the power of sin still remained within him. After passing through a season of deep distress and spiritual baptism, he was brought unto a state of humble obedience and entire reliance upon this inward monitor, when he received "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Being thus prepared for service in the church, he was endowed with a gift in the gospel ministry, and became an eminent instrument in the Lord's hands to promote his glorious cause of righteousness and truth.

---

* London Friend, 7th month, 1853.

† J. Burnyeat's Works, London, 1691, p. 1—7; and Gough's Hist., Book VI. chap. IV.

CHAPTER IX.

George Fox leaves Swarthmore—At Drayton meets N. Stephens—Controversy with him—Arrested by Col. Hacker and taken to London—Interview with Cromwell—Great meetings in London—Settlement of Friends' meetings in the city—Letter from A. Pearson—Second visit to Whitehall—Cromwell's news-monger—His triers of the clergy—George Fox travels in Kent and Sussex—Visits J. Parnel—Sketch of his life and death.

1654.

After having witnessed the settlement of a large number of Friends' meetings in the north of England, George Fox took leave of his kind friends at Swarthmore-hall, in the early part of the year 1654, and directing his course southward, he visited the midland counties of Derby, Nottingham, Lincoln, and Leicester. During this journey, he held large meetings, and made numerous proselytes, but he encountered much opposition, and had many discussions with the priests and their adherents.

At Drayton, in Leicestershire, he visited his relatives, and there he again met with his old pastor, Nathaniel Stephens, who, having veered round with the changes of the government, was now a preacher among the Independents. They had several interviews, in the first of which Stephens and another clergyman having challenged him to a public discussion on the subject of tithes, he did not shrink from the encounter, but showed them from the seventh chapter of the Hebrews, "That not only tithes, but the priesthood that took tithes, was ended, and the law was ended and disannulled, by which the priesthood was made." He writes in his Journal, "I had known Stephens from a child, therefore I laid open his condition, and the manner of his preaching, and how he, like the rest of the priests, did apply the promises to the first birth, which must die. But I showed that the promises were to the

seed, not to many seeds, but to the one seed, Christ, who was one in male and female; for all were to be born again before they could enter into the kingdom of God."

At the close of the discussion he told them "that if the Lord would permit he intended to be in the town again that day seven-night." In the meantime, he attended some meetings in the country, and returned on the day appointed, when he found that Stephens was determined to renew the discussion, and had engaged seven other clergymen to assist him.

Several hundred people were assembled, and they urged George Fox to enter the parish house of worship, but he declined, and being accompanied by Thomas Taylor and James Parnel, he addressed the people from the top of a hill. After some disputation, several lusty men took him up in their arms, and carried him to the "steeple-house," but the door being locked, they placed him on a wall adjacent, where the priests and people were assembled. The clergymen cried out, "Come to argument! to argument!"

GEORGE FOX. "I deny all your voices, for they are the voices of hirelings and strangers.

CLERGYMEN. "Prove it! prove it."

GEORGE FOX. "You may see, in the tenth of John, what Christ has said of such; he declared he was the true shepherd that laid down his life for his sheep, and his sheep heard his voice and followed him, but the hireling would fly, when the wolf came, because he was an hireling. You are such as the prophet Jeremiah cried against, (Chap. V.) when he said "the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule through their means," which he called an horrible filthy thing. You are such as used their tongues and said, 'thus saith the Lord,' when the Lord never spoke to them. Such that followed their own spirits and saw nothing, but spoke a divination of their own brain, and by their lies and their lightness caused the people to err."

"You are such as they were that sought their gain from their quarter; that were as greedy dumb dogs, that could never

have enough, whom the Lord sent his prophet Isaiah to cry against. (Isa. lvi.) You are such as they were who taught for handfuls of barley, and pieces of bread, who sewed pillows under people's arm-holes, that they might lie soft in their sins. (Ezek. xiii.) You are such as they that taught for the fleece and the wool and made a prey of the people. (Ezek. xxxiv.) But the Lord is gathering his sheep from your mouths, and from your barren mountains, and is bringing them to Christ the one shepherd whom he hath set over his flocks; as by his prophet Ezekiel he then declared he would do."

Having thus continued through the prophets, he came to the New Testament, and showed that the clergy were like the Pharisees, who loved to be called of men, masters, to go in long robes, to stand praying in the synagogues, and to have the uppermost rooms at feasts; and then, turning to the people, he directed their attention "to the light of Jesus, who enlightens every man that cometh into the world." At the close of the discussion he announced "that he should, God willing, be in town that day seven-night again." Many of the people were convinced, and his father, though a hearer and follower of the priest, was so well satisfied, that he struck his cane upon the ground, and said, "Truly I see, he that will but stand to the truth, it will bear him out."

The language addressed to Stephens and his coadjutors on this occasion, may seem, to modern ears, exceedingly harsh, but we must bear in mind the mercenary conduct then common among the clergy, many of whom, as well as Stephens himself, had changed their profession in order to keep their benefices.

At the expiration of a week, George Fox, agreeably to his appointment, held a meeting at Drayton, in the house of one of his relatives; but the priests, although notified, did not attend.

Resuming his travels, he came to Whetstone, in Leicestershire, where he was arrested by some troopers of Colonel Hacker's regiment, there being, at that time, a rumour of a

plot against Oliver Cromwell. Being brought before the Colonel, and many other officers of the army, they had much discourse "about the light of Christ, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world."

COLONEL HACKER. "Was it not this light of Christ that made Judas betray his master, and afterwards led him to hang himself?"

GEORGE FOX. "No, that was the spirit of darkness, which hated Christ and his light."

COLONEL HACKER. "You may go home, if you will stay there, and not go abroad to meetings."

GEORGE FOX. "I am an innocent man, free from all plots, and I deny all such work."

COLONEL HACKER'S SON NEEDHAM. "Father, this man hath reigned too long; it is time to have him cut off."

GEORGE FOX. "For what? What have I done, or whom have I wronged from a child? I was born and bred in this county, and who can accuse me of any evil from a child?"

COLONEL HACKER. "Will you go home and stay at home?"

GEORGE FOX. "If I should make such a promise, it would manifest that I was guilty of something, to make my house a prison; and if I should go to meetings, you would say I broke your order."

COLONEL HACKER. "Well, then, I will send you to-morrow morning, by six o'clock, to my Lord Protector, by Captain Drury, one of his Life-guard."

Next morning, before his departure, George Fox asked leave to see Colonel Hacker, and was taken to his bed-side. The Colonel again desired him to go home, and keep no more meetings. George told him, "He could not submit to that, but must have liberty to serve God, and to go to meetings." Then kneeling on the bed-side, "He besought the Lord to forgive Colonel Hacker, for he was as Pilate, though he would wash his hands;" and to the Colonel he said, "When the day

of thy misery and trial shall come upon thee, remember what I have said to thee."*

Being taken to London by Captain Drury, he was lodged at the Mermaid inn, "over against the mews at Charing-cross." Here he was informed, that the Protector required him "To promise that he would not take up a carnal sword or weapon against him, or the government as it then was." He made no immediate answer, but the next morning he addressed a letter to Oliver Cromwell, stating that, "He did, in the presence of the Lord, declare, that he denied the wearing or drawing a carnal sword, or any other outward weapon, against him or any man." And furthermore, "That he was sent of God to stand a witness against all violence, and against the works of darkness, and to turn people from darkness to the light; to bring them from the occasion of war and fighting, to the peaceable gospel; and from being evil doers, which the magistrate's sword should be a terror to."

This being handed to Cromwell, he required the attendance of George Fox, who thus relates the interview: "After some time, Captain Drury brought me before the Protector himself, at Whitehall. It was in the morning before he was dressed; and one Harvey, who had come a little among Friends, but was disobedient, waited upon him. When I came in, I was moved to say, 'Peace be in this house,' and I exhorted him to keep in the fear of God, that he might receive wisdom from him; that by it he might be ordered, and with it might order all things under his hand unto God's glory. I spoke much to him of truth; and a great deal of discourse I had with him about religion, wherein he carried himself very moderately. But he said, 'We quarrelled with the priests,' whom he called ministers. I told him, 'I did not quarrel with them; they

* Colonel Hacker was, after the Restoration, imprisoned at London, and hanged at Tyburn. A day or two before his execution, he was reminded of what he had done against the innocent. He confessed it to Margaret Fell, saying, "He knew well whom she meant; and he had trouble upon him for it."

quarrelled with me and my friends. But,' said I, 'if we own the prophets, Christ, and the apostles, we cannot hold up such teachers, prophets and shepherds, as the prophets, Christ, and the apostles declared against; but we must declare against them by the same power and spirit.' Then I showed him, 'That the prophets, Christ, and the apostles, declared freely, and declared against them that did not declare freely; such as preached for filthy lucre, divined for money, and preached for hire, and were covetous and greedy, like the dumb dogs that could never have enough; and that they who have the same spirit that Christ and the prophets, and the apostles had, could not but declare against all such now, as they did then.' As I spoke, he several times said, 'It was very good, and it was truth.' I told him, 'That all Christendom (so called) had the scriptures, but they wanted the power and spirit that those had who gave forth the scriptures; and that was the reason they were not in fellowship with the Son, nor with the Father, nor with the scriptures, nor one with another.' Many more words I had with him; but people coming in, I drew a little back. As I was turning, he catched me by the hand, and, with tears in his eyes, said, 'Come again to my house; for if thou and I were but an hour of a day together, we should be nearer one to the other;' adding, 'That he wished me no more ill than he did to his own soul.' I told him, 'If he did, he wronged his own soul; and admonished him to hearken to God's voice, that he might stand in his counsel and obey it; and if he did so, that would keep him from hardness of heart; but if he did not hear God's voice, his heart would be hardened.' He said, 'It was true.' Then I went out; and when Captain Drury came out after me, he told me, 'His Lord Protector said I was at liberty, and might go whither I would.' Then I was brought into a great hall, where the Protector's gentlemen were to dine. I asked them, 'What they brought me thither for?' They said, 'It was by the Protector's order, that I might dine with them.' I bid them let the Protector know, 'I would not eat of his bread, nor drink of his drink.'

When he heard of this, he said, 'Now I see there is a people risen, that I cannot win either with gifts, honours, offices, or places; but all other sects and people I can.' It was told him again, 'That we had forsook our own; and were not like to look for such things from him.'"

This first interview with the Protector took place on the 19th of the 12th month, 1654, (equivalent to February, '55,) after which, being set at liberty, he returned to the inn at Charing-cross.* Here he was visited by great numbers of almost every profession, including many clergymen and officers of the army. Among those who came was Col. Packer, with several of his officers. At the same time, a company of Ranters came in, who began to call for drink and tobacco. George Fox desired them to forbear drinking in his room; if they were disposed to drink, they might go into another room. One of them cried, "All is ours." Another said, "All is well." George, perceiving him to be of a peevish disposition, replied, "How is all well, while thou art so envious, peevish, and crabbed?" He also reproved Col. Packer, who, though a professor of religion, was conversing on serious subjects in a light and unbecoming manner. The colonel and the Ranters bowed and scraped to one another very much, upon which he told them, "They were fit to go together, for they were both of one spirit."

After a short stay at the inn, he went into the city of London, where he had "great and powerful meetings." So immense were the crowds in attendance, that he could scarcely get to and from the meetings, and great numbers embraced the doctrines he taught.

In the early part of that year, a number of persons in and near the metropolis had been convinced of Friends' principles. It is believed that the earliest advocates of these doctrines who appeared in the city, were Isabel Buttery and a companion of her own sex, who came from the north of England,

* Tracts in British Museum, quoted by A. R. Barclay, in "Letters of Early Friends."

and brought with them a tract of George Fox, addressed, "To all that would know the way to the Kingdom." * This tract being printed, they distributed to such as were willing to receive it, and they held private meetings at Robert Dring's, in Watling-street, and Samuel Dring's, in Moorfields, where they sometimes spoke a few words in gospel ministry.†

Early in the summer of the same year, Edward Burrough, Francis Howgill, and Anthony Pearson, came to the city, and were the first Friends who held public meetings there. They were soon after joined by John Camm and Richard Hubberthorn, and many proselytes to the doctrines of spiritual religion were made through their united ministry.

A letter in the Swarthmore collection, from Anthony Pearson to George Fox, dated 30th of 5th month, 1654, relates to their gospel labours. He says, "At London we found very many who have a true principle of honesty in them, but they are, for the most part, so high-flown in wisdom and notions, that it is hard to reach them. . . . . Much wisdom is to be used amongst them, until the truth be clearly understood; and then to speak to that in their consciences, to the raising up of the witness, to let them see themselves. . . . . Few words must be used, for they have held the truth in notions; and all cry out, 'What do these men say more than others have said?' But to bring them to silence, confounds their wisdom.

"Dear heart; let none go to London, but in the clear and pure movings of the spirit of Life, that the blessing may rest upon them. And great is the harvest like to be in that city; hundreds are convinced, and thousands wait to see the issue, who have persuasions that it is the truth."‡

George Fox, being impelled by a sense of duty to visit Whitehall again, preached the word of life among the officers and attendants of the Protector, but he was opposed by

* This is the first Tract in his Doctrinals.

† Wm. Crouch's Mem. Friends, Lib. XI. 300.

‡ Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, No. III.

a priest, who was retained in Oliver's pay as news-monger. This man, being a writer for the court paper, published false and absurd reports concerning the Friends; as for example, that George Fox wore silver buttons, and that he hung ribbons on people's arms to make them follow him. He replied that, "His buttons were not silver, but ochimy; and as for ribbons, he never used nor wore them in his life." "These priests, the news-mongers," he writes, "were of the Independent sect," like those of Leicester who instigated Colonel Hacker, to arrest him and send him before the Protector. They were greatly disturbed at the success of his religious labours, for "There was a great convincement in London, and some in the Protector's house and family."

About this time, he wrote several papers for distribution. One of them was addressed, "To Professors of Christianity," showing, from the scriptures, the difference between that outward formal religion, in which the carnal persecuting nature is unsubdued, and that inward and spiritual devotion, which purifies the soul, and fills it with love to God and man. Another was addressed "To such as follow the world's fashion." A third was, an exhortation and warning to the Pope and all the kings and rulers of Europe. A fourth was directed to the commissioners, appointed by Cromwell, to examine the clergy who were candidates for benefices. These commissioners were generally called triers; they were in number thirty-eight, of whom some were Presbyterians, others Independents, and a few Baptists.*

In addressing these triers, George Fox demonstrates that the tithe system of Great Britain is inconsistent with the spirit of christianity and the practice of the apostles. He queries of them, "Did not Christ put an end to that priesthood, tithes, temple, and priest? Doth not the apostle say, The priesthood is changed, the law is changed, and the commandment disannulled? Might not they have pleaded the

* Neal's History of the Puritans, II. 144–5.

law of God, that gave them tithes? * * * * Was not the first author of them since Christ's time the pope, or some of his church? Did the apostles cast men into prison for tithes, as your ministers do now? As instance: Ralph Hollingworth, priest of Phillingham, for petty tithes not exceeding six shillings, hath cast into Lincoln prison, a poor thatcher, Thomas Bromby; where he hath been about eight and thirty weeks, and still remains prisoner: and the priest petitioned the judge, that the poor man might not labour in the city, to get a little money towards his maintenance in prison. Is this a good savour amongst you, that are in commission to choose ministers? Is this glad tidings? to cast in prison a man that is not his hearer, because he could not put into his mouth? Can such as are in the fear of God, and in his wisdom, own such things? The ministers of Christ are to plant a vineyard, and then eat of the fruit; to plough, sow, and thresh, and get the corn; and then let them reap: but not cast them into prison for whom they do no work. Christ, when he sent forth his ministers, bid them give freely as they had received freely; and into what city or town soever they came, inquire who were worthy and there abide; and what they set before you, said he, that eat. And when these came back again to Christ, and he asked them, 'If they wanted anything?' they said, 'No.' They did not go to a town, and call the people together, to know how much they might have by the year, as these that are in the apostacy do now. The apostle said, Have I not power to eat and to drink? But he did not say 'To take tithes, easter reckonings, midsummer dues, augmentations, and great sums of money; but have I not power to eat and to drink? Yet he did not use that power among the Corinthians. But they that are apostatized from him, will take tithes, great sums of money, easter reckonings, and midsummer dues; and cast those into prison, that will not give it them, whom they do not work for. The ox's mouth must not be muzzled that treads out the corn; but see if the corn be trodden out in you, and the wheat be in the

garner? This is from a lover of your souls, and one that desires your eternal good.

GEORGE FOX."

After witnessing the rapid growth and firm establishment of Friends' meetings in London, he travelled for some months in the counties adjacent, frequently visiting the metropolis, and pursuing his usual course of earnest and successful labour in the gospel ministry. In Kent and Sussex, he found a ready reception for his doctrines, which were embraced by many. At Coggshell, in Essex, about two thousand persons attended one of his meetings, in which divine grace and power were eminently manifested. At Colchester, he visited James Parnel, who was then in prison for his religious principles. The character of this youthful minister was so extraordinary, that a brief sketch of his career may not be unacceptable to the reader.

He was born at Retford, in Nottinghamshire, and enjoyed the advantage of a good education. At about sixteen years of age, he visited George Fox in the prison at Carlisle, by whose ministry he was so effectually reached, that he was convinced of the principles of Friends, for embracing which he was despised and rejected by his relatives. Notwithstanding his youth, he soon became an able and successful minister of the gospel. Being imprisoned at Cambridge for his zealous exhortations, and afterwards turned out of town like a vagabond, he soon came back, and disputed with the scholars of the university, by whom he was rudely treated.

At eighteen years of age, he travelled in Essex, and coming to Colchester on the First-day of the week, he preached the gospel in the parish house of worship, after sermon, and subsequently in a great meeting appointed for him. He disputed with the town lecturer, and another clergyman, in the French school, all of one day; so that many were convinced of his doctrines, among whom was Stephen Crisp, a man of learning and ability, that afterwards became eminent as a writer and minister in the Society of Friends.

During more than a week, James Parnel continued at Colchester, preaching and conversing on the subject of religion, but his pious zeal was rewarded with many blows, which he patiently endured. Once, on coming out of a place of worship, he was struck with a staff by one of his opponents, who said to him, "There, take that for Christ's sake." He meekly answered, "Friend, I do receive it for Jesus Christ's sake."

Having heard that a fast was proclaimed to be kept at Coggshell, to pray against the errors of the people called Quakers, he went thither, and entered the parish house of worship, where the minister, who was an Independent, was preaching against the Quakers, as deceivers. James Parnel stood in silence till he had done, and then claimed the privilege of replying. His request not being granted, a discussion ensued, during which the clergyman ascended the pulpit, and began to pray; but Parnel not taking off his hat, the magistrates ordered him to put it off. He said in reply, "Order the priest to put off his cap;" and then he withdrew from the house. Soon after, he was arrested, and committed to the common jail at Colchester.

The time of the sessions at Chelmsford being come, he was fastened to a chain, with several felons and murderers, and thus led eighteen miles to the place of trial. Being brought before the court, he was indicted for contempt of magistracy and ministry, on the testimony of a clergyman and two magistrates. The jury not being willing to bring in a verdict against him, the judge amerced him £40, and committed him to prison until the fine should be paid.

He was confined in an old ruinous castle, said to have been built by the Romans, and his friends were denied access to him. The jailor and his wife vied with each other in abusing him. She caused him to be beaten, withheld the victuals his friends brought to him, and denied him the use of the bed they provided for him; so that he was compelled to lie upon the cold damp stones. Afterwards he was put into "the hole

in the wall," a little cell arched over like a baker's oven. This cell was twelve feet from the ground, and the ladder by which he ascended to it, was six feet too short, so that he had to climb up by a rope.

One day, when climbing to his cell with his victuals in one hand, he caught at the rope, but missing it, he fell on the pavement below, and was so much bruised that he was taken up for dead. He was then put into another cell of the same kind, but smaller, and nearer to the ground. This place having no window, nor any other means of ventilation, when the door was closed he was almost suffocated. After ten or eleven months' imprisonment, his limbs were benumbed, and his body weakened; when, being taken sick, two of his friends, Thomas Shortland and Ann Langly, were permitted to see him.

When death approached, he said, "Here I die innocently." A little after, he was heard to say, "Now I must go!" and turning his head to Thomas, he said, "This death I must die. Thomas, I have seen great things: don't hold me, but let me go." Then he said again, "Will you hold me?" to which Ann replied, "No, dear heart, we will not hold thee." He had often said, "that one hour's sleep would cure him of all," and the last words he was heard to say were, "Now I go." Then he stretched himself out, and after sleeping about an hour, he quietly breathed his last.*

Thus perished a valiant soldier of the cross, who, for his testimony against a corrupt church and persecuting ministry, was cut off in the flower of his youth, and that too, under the protectorate of Cromwell, the professed friend of religious liberty.

---

* Sewel, I. 140–3. See also "Fruits of a Fast," &c. by James Parnel. London ed. 1655.

CHAPTER X.

Cromwell's pretensions examined — Milton on religious liberty — One thousand Friends in prison—Hostility of the clergy and magistrates and indifference of the Protector — George Fox revisits Drayton — Proceeds to Warwickshire — Is visited by W. Edmundson — Sketch of W. Edmundson's life—George Fox visits a sick woman among the Baptists — Returns to London — Meets with J. Nayler — Travels in several counties, escorted by a captain — Sends an address to Land's End — Arrested by Major Ceely, and sent to Lanceston jail — Meets General Desborough—Trial before Judge Glyn—Offence of the hat—Paper on swearing—Major Ceely's malice—Defence of George Fox—He is remanded to prison.

1655–6.

THE eulogists of Oliver Cromwell have claimed for him the high distinction of being the chief instrument in promoting civil and religious liberty in England. He made, indeed, great professions of liberal principles, but in practice he was more despotic than the Stuarts; arrogating to himself all the powers of government, dissolving the Parliaments at his pleasure, and depriving the people of their ancient privileges. The only palliation that could be offered for his usurpation, was the supposed necessity of employing his dauntless courage and vigorous intellect to control discordant factions, and save the state from anarchy.

His secretary Milton, scarcely less renowned for his love of liberty than for his learning and genius, wrote a sonnet, in which he addressed the Protector as "our chief of men," and after alluding to his victorious career, and wonderful advancement, reminds him that

> "Much remains
> To conquer still; peace hath her victories
> No less renowned than war: new foes arise
> Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains;
> Help us to save free conscience from the paw
> Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw."

The great poet also wrote a treatise "On the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church," in which he shows the dangers that attend the union of church and state, or the intermeddling of the civil power with ecclesiastical affairs. One of the means proposed to remove hirelings out of the church, was to deprive them of the support derived from the tithe system; but Cromwell evinced no disposition to relieve the people from this burden, imposed on them by an apostate church. His aim was to strengthen his own power by a skilful distribution of ecclesiastical preferments; hence he appointed for his chaplains, an Independent, a Presbyterian, and a Baptist; and his "triers," for the examination of ministers, were selected from these three denominations, who shared among them the spoils taken from the Anglican clergy.

He maintained that "The supreme magistrate should exercise his conscience in erecting what form of church government he is satisfied should be set up."* This doctrine takes from the people all ecclesiastical power, and places it in the hands of the chief magistrate; a policy which is alike destructive to religious liberty, and detrimental to public morals. He professed a desire to extend a free toleration to all religious sects, who were peaceable in their demeanour; but if such was his real intention, he failed most signally in its accomplishment; for, during the latter part of his administration, while in the plenitude of his power, there were seldom fewer than one thousand Friends in prison on account of their religious testimonies.

This severe persecution, from which other sects were mostly exempted, may be attributed to the hostility of the clergy, who, fearing the loss of their revenues, reprobated the doctrines of Friends, as not only subversive of ecclesiastical power, but, as they pretended, inimical to civil government. In many places this hostility was imbibed by the magistrates and people, who manifested great enmity and contempt for

* D'Aubigne's Cromwell, Chap. X.

a society that dispensed with all ceremony in religious worship, and addressed even rulers and judges without the usual tokens of reverence. When no other pretext could be found, the oath of abjuration of the Pope was often tendered to them by the persecuting justices, and because they could not swear in any case, they were committed to prison.

In the year 1655, George Fox wrote to the Protector, setting forth the increasing sufferings of Friends, who, for preaching in markets and fairs against pride, wantonness, cheating, and swearing, were cast into prison, while those who were guilty of such evil practices, were left at liberty. The conclusion of his letter is here subjoined:

"Many have suffered great fines because they could not swear, but abide in Christ's doctrine, who saith, 'Swear not at all;' and by that means are they made a prey upon, for abiding in the command of Christ. Many are cast into prison and made a prey upon, because they cannot take the oath of abjuration, though they denied all that is abjured in it; and by that means many of the messengers and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ are cast into prison because they will not swear, nor go out of Christ's command. Therefore, O man! consider; to the measure of the life of God in thee I speak. Many also lie in jails, because they cannot pay the priests' tithes; many have their goods spoiled, and treble damages taken of them; many are whipped and beaten in the houses of correction, who have broken no law. These things are done in thy name, in order to protect them in these actions. If men, fearing God, bore the sword, and covetousness was hated, and men of courage for God were set up, then they would be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well; and not cause such to suffer. Here equity would be heard in our land, and righteousness would stand up and take place; which giveth not place to the unrighteous, but judgeth it. To the measure of God's spirit in thee I speak, that thou mayest consider and come to rule for God: that thou mayest answer that which is of God in every man's conscience; for

that is it which bringeth to honour all men in the Lord. Therefore consider for whom thou rulest, that thou mayest come to receive power from God to rule for him; and all that is contrary to God may by his light be condemned.

"From a lover of thy soul, who desires thy eternal good.

GEORGE FOX."

This remonstrance, and others of similar import, addressed to the Protector, appear to have had but little effect; for Oliver was more intent on securing his own aggrandizement, than on protecting a peaceable, inoffensive people, whose religious principles forbade their promoting his ambitious designs.

After a short stay in London, George Fox proceeded to Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, holding meetings, in which "many were turned to the Lord." Coming into Leicestershire, he understood that Col. Hacker had threatened to imprison him again. Nowise daunted by this report, he went to the same meeting where he was before arrested, and the Colonel's wife and his marshal being present, both became proselytes to the doctrines he taught. He says in his Journal, "The glorious, powerful day of the Lord was exalted over all, and many were convinced that day. There were at that meeting two justices of the peace from Wales, named Peter Price and Walter Jenkins, who came both to be ministers of Christ."

Soon after, he came to Drayton, his native place, where recently so many priests had been arrayed against him, but now none of them appeared to oppose him. He inquired of his relatives, "Where were all the priests?" They answered, "The priest of Non-eaton is dead, and eight or nine of them are seeking to get his benefice. They will let you alone now, for they are like a company of crows, when a rotten sheep is dead; they all gather together to pull at the carcase; so do the priests for a fallen benefice."

Being informed that at Evesham the magistrates had cast several Friends into prison, and that, hearing of his coming,

they had erected a high pair of stocks; he nevertheless proceeded to that place, where, in the evening, he had a large, precious meeting, and next morning he visited his friends in two prisons, among whom was Humphrey Smith, formerly a clergyman, but now a free minister of Christ."

No sooner had George Fox left the prison, and turned to go out of town, than he saw the magistrates coming up the street to seize him, but he continued on his way and escaped with a thankful heart.

At Badgley in Warwickshire, he met with William Edmundson, who had come from his residence in Ireland purposely to see him. William was a native of Westmoreland, in the north of England. Early in life, he had been brought under the influence of religious impressions, but he entered the army, and served under Cromwell in Scotland, in the year 1650. The next year he was at the battle of Worcester, where the King's army was totally defeated. "After the fight," he says in his Journal, "I was troubled in mind for my vanity, for the Lord preserved my life still, but I fled from judgment and made merry over God's witness in my conscience, which testified against me." He again marched with the army into Scotland, having charge of some men for recruiting other companies there. After delivering up his charge, he left the army, and returned to the north of England to visit his relatives. He then married, and with his wife went to Ireland, taking with him a supply of goods to commence shop-keeping.

In 1653, his stock of goods being sold, he returned to the north of England, at the time that George Fox and James Nayler were holding meetings there. Having long wished to become acquainted with Friends, he and two of his relatives attended a meeting held by James Nayler, under whose ministry they were, he says, "all three convinced of the Lord's blessed truth," for God's witness in our hearts answered to the truth of what was spoken, and the Lord's former dealings with me came fresh into my remembrance. Then I knew

it was the Lord's hand that had been striving with me for a long time."

When he returned into Ireland to resume his business, his mind underwent a great conflict of religious exercise. "My sleep" he says, "departed from me, and many times in the night under great trouble of mind, crying and weeping, I wished for day, and when day came, my sorrows remaining, I wished for night." His wife and brother, being also convinced, they three held meetings together, twice a week, at his house. In a little while, four more persons joined their meeting at Antrim, which afterwards continued to increase. He was called to speak a few words in gospel ministry, but in much fear, he says, "lest a wrong spirit should get entrance and deceive me, in the likeness of an angel of light, for I was sensible of my own weakness." Feeling an impression of duty to confer with George Fox, he went to England and met him at Badgley as already related. "When the meeting was ended," he says, "I went to George Fox, and he took notice of me; we went into an orchard, and kneeling down, he prayed. The Lord's heavenly power and presence were there; he was tender over me. I told him where I lived, of several being convinced in Ireland, of the openness among the people in the north of that nation to hear the truth declared, and the want of ministering Friends in the gospel there. He wrote the following epistle to Friends, which he sent with me; viz:

FRIENDS:—In that which convinced you, wait; that you may have that removed you are convinced of. And, all my dear friends, dwell in the life, love, power, and wisdom of God, in unity one with another, and with God; and the peace and wisdom of God fill all your hearts, that nothing may rule in you but the life which stands in the Lord God.

GEORGE FOX."

"I returned," says W. Edmundson, "to Ireland, and read the foregoing epistle to Friends, in the meeting; there the power of the Lord seized on us, whereby we were mightily

shaken and broken into tears and weeping." He became an able minister of the gospel, was eminently useful in the administration of church discipline, and laboured successfully in the cause of truth, in Ireland, England and America.

George Fox, having come to Baldock in Hertfordshire, inquired, after his usual manner, for serious people, or professors of religion. He was informed, "There were some Baptists, and a woman of that profession sick." He went to see her, and thus describes the interviews. "They told me, 'She was not a woman for this world; but if I had any thing to comfort her, concerning the world to come, I might speak to her.' I was moved of the Lord to speak to her; and he raised her up again, to the astonishment of the town and country. Her husband's name was Baldock. This Baptist woman and her husband came to be convinced, and many hundreds of people have met at their house since. Great meetings and convincements were in those parts afterwards; many received the word of life, and sat down under the teaching of Christ their Saviour."

On returning to London, he found the meetings of Friends prosperous and increasing, but John Toldervey, one of the members, had fallen into error and brought reproach upon his profession, which was cause of grief to his friends, and of rejoicing to their adversaries, who issued a publication, intended to render them odious. The poor man, however, who gave occasion for this scandal, came to see his folly, endeavoured to repair the wrong he had done, and was restored to the society. James Nayler was at that time in London, in high esteem for his religious services, but George Fox was then 'struck with a fear concerning him,' which was afterwards mournfully verified.

Leaving London, accompanied by Edward Pyot of Bristol, he travelled through several counties of the western circuit,—Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire and Cornwall,—in all of which he held meetings and made proselytes. At Weymouth, he inquired after serious people, and, "About fourscore of them assembled at a priest's house." "Most of

them," he says, "received the word of life, and were turned to their teacher Christ Jesus; who had enlightened them with his divine light, by which they might see their sins, and him who saveth from sin." A blessed meeting we had with them, and they received the truth in the love of it, with gladness of heart. A Friends' meeting was at once established there, and he took his departure.

There was in that town, a captain of a troop of horse, who would fain have had him to stay longer, and went with him seven miles accompanied by his troop, which was certainly a singular escort for a ministering Friend. "This captain," he writes, "was the fattest, merriest, cheerfullest man, and the most given to laughter, that I ever met with: insomuch that I was several times moved to speak in the dreadful power of the Lord to him; yet it was become so customary to him, that he would presently laugh at any thing he saw. But I still admonished him to sobriety, and the fear of the Lord, and sincerity. We lay at an inn that night; and the next morning I was moved to speak to him again, when he parted from us. Next time I saw him, he told me, 'When I spoke to him at parting, the power of the Lord so struck him, that before he got home he was serious enough, and had left his laughing. He afterwards was convinced, and became a serious good man, and died in the truth."

Proceeding towards Land's-End, George Fox came to Market-Jew, where there was an attempt made to arrest him by the mayor and aldermen, who sent their constables to summon him before them. As the officers, however, had no warrant for his arrest, he declined to go with them, and reproved them for their incivility to strangers, who had given them no cause of offence. Before he left the town, he wrote a letter of exhortation to the inhabitants of the seven parishes at the Land's-End, which he sent by a man going to St. Ives. This man proved to be a servant of Peter Ceely, a major in the army, and a justice of the peace in that county. When George Fox and his companion came to St. Ives, Major Ceely,

who had received the letter, asked the former if he would own it. He said, yes. Then the major tendered to them the oath of abjuration, and George handed to him a copy of the answer to it, which he had given to the Protector. The major had with him "a silly young priest," who asked many frivolous questions, and wished to cut the hair of George Fox, which being longer than usual, was probably looked upon as an evidence of disaffection to Cromwell and the Puritan party then in power.

After a tedious examination, George Fox, Edward Pyot, and William Salt, were placed under a guard of troopers, with a warrant to conduct them to the governor of Pendennis castle, and if he should not be at home, they were to be lodged in Lanceston jail. Notwithstanding the harsh and rude treatment received from the soldiers, the prisoners managed to preach to the people in the several towns through which they were conducted. "On First-day," says George Fox, in his Journal, "several of the towns-people gathered around us, and whilst I held the soldiers in discourse, Edward Pyot spoke to the people; and afterward, Edward Pyot held the soldiers in discourse whilst I spoke to the people. In the meantime, the other Friend got out backwards, and went to the steeple-house, to speak to the priest and people. The people were exceedingly desperate, in a mighty rage against him, and abused him. The soldiers also missing him, were in a great rage, and threatened to kill us; but I declared the day of the Lord and the word of eternal life to the people."

On the road, they met Major General Desborough, the captain of whose troop being acquainted with George Fox, exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Fox, what do you here?" He replied, "I am a prisoner." "Alack!" said the captain, "for what?" "I was taken up as I was travelling." "Then," said he, "I will speak to my lord, and he will set you at liberty." He accordingly rode up to the general's carriage, and spoke to him. The prisoners also related how they were taken. The general spoke against the doctrine of "The Light of Christ,"

whereupon George Fox exhorted him, but without making much impression. General Desborough then told the soldiers they might carry the prisoners to Lanceston, for he could not stay to talk, lest his horses should take cold.

Being lodged in Lanceston jail, they were required by the jailor each to pay seven shillings a week for horse-feed, and seven shillings for their diet. Many friendly people came to see them, and some embraced their doctrines; but the priests were exasperated, and said, "This people 'thou' and 'thee' all men without respect, and will not put off their hats, nor bow the knee to any man; but we shall see, when the assize comes, whether they will dare to 'thou' and 'thee' the judge and keep on their hats before him."

It was nine weeks, from the time of their commitment to the assizes, held in the spring of 1656, when a great concourse attended to witness their trial. The people filled the streets, through which the prisoners were guarded by a troop of horse. Judge Glyn, a Welshman, then chief justice of England, was on the bench. When they were brought into court, George Fox said, "Peace be amongst you."

JUDGE GLYN, (to the jailor.) "What be these you have brought here into court?"

JAILOR. "Prisoners, my lord."

JUDGE, (to the prisoners,) "Why do you not put off your hats?"

They said nothing.

"Put off your hats," said the judge again.

Still, they said nothing.

JUDGE. "The court commands you to put off your hats."

GEORGE FOX. "Where did ever any magistrate, king, or judge, from Moses to Daniel, command any to put off their hats, when they came before them in their courts, either amongst the Jews, (the people of God,) or amongst the heathen? And if the law of England doth command any such thing, show me that law either written or printed."

JUDGE, (in an angry tone.) "I do not carry my law-books on my back."

GEORGE FOX. "Tell me where it is printed in any statute book, that I may read it."

JUDGE. "Take him away—prevaricator! I'll firk him."

The prisoners were then taken away and put among the thieves; but presently the judge called to the jailor to bring them up again.

JUDGE, (to George Fox.) Come! where had they any hats, from Moses to Daniel! Come answer me, I have you fast now."

GEORGE FOX. "Thou mayst read in the third of Daniel that the three children were cast into the fiery furnace by Nebuchadnezzar's command, with their coats, their hose, and *hats* on."

JUDGE. "Take them away, jailor."

Accordingly they were removed from court and again conducted to prison under a guard of troops. They had with them several "scores of books," relating to Friends' principles, intended for distribution among inquirers, but these were violently taken from them, by order of the judge and justices. In the afternoon, they were again brought into court, when George Fox observing the jurymen and others taking oaths, was grieved to see such a manifest violation of Christ's command; and therefore handed forth a paper, which he had with him, concerning swearing.* This paper passing from the jury to the justices, they handed it to the judge, who directed the clerk to ask George Fox, "Whether that seditious paper was his?"

GEORGE FOX. "If you will read it up in open court that I may hear it; if it is mine, I will own it, and stand by it."

Clerk. "Take it yourself and examine it."

GEORGE FOX. "I desire that it may be read, that all the

* See Dissertation on Testimonies, at the end of this volume.

country may hear it, and judge whether there is any sedition in it or not, for if there is I am willing to suffer for it."

At last the clerk read it with an audible voice, that all the people might hear it. When he had ended, George Fox said, "I own it and so may you too, unless you deny the scriptures: for is not this scripture language—the words and command of Christ and the apostle, which all true christians ought to obey?" They then laid aside the paper, and the judge returned to the subject of their hats; bidding the jailor take them off, which he did, and handed them to the prisoners, who put them on again. George Fox said to the judge and justices, "Why have we been detained in prison these nine weeks, seeing that nothing is objected to us, but about our hats? As for putting off our hats, that is an honour which God will lay in the dust, though you make so much ado about it. The honour which is of men and which men seek one of another, is a mark of unbelievers; for 'how can ye believe,' saith Christ, 'who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?' Christ saith, 'I receive not honour from men,' and all true christians should be of his mind."

The judge then made a pompous speech, stating that he represented the Protector's person, who made him Lord Chief Justice of England, and sent him on that circuit. George Fox replied, "We desire, then, that thou wouldst do us justice for our false imprisonment, which we have suffered nine weeks wrongfully." But, instead of this, an indictment was brought in against them, so full of false charges, that it might be supposed to relate to some of the thieves. George Fox told them "It was all false;" and he asked for justice for their false imprisonment, being taken up by Major Ceely, without cause, while on their journey.

Major Ceely. "May it please you, my lord, this man (*pointing to George Fox*) went aside with me, and told me how serviceable I might be for his design; that he could raise forty thousand men at an hour's warning, involve the nation

in blood, and so bring in King Charles. I would have aided him out of the country, but he would not go. If it please you, my lord, I have a witness to swear it." He then called upon his witness, but the judge not being forward to examine him, the following dialogue ensued:

GEORGE FOX. "I desire that my mittimus may be read in the face of the court and country, in which my crime is signified, for which I was sent to prison."

JUDGE GLYN. "It shall not be read."

GEORGE FOX. "It ought to be read, seeing that it concerns my liberty and my life."

JUDGE. "It shall not be read."

GEORGE FOX. "It ought to be read; for if I have done anything worthy of death or of bonds, let all the country know it." Then turning to a fellow-prisoner, he added, "Thou hast a copy, read it up."

JUDGE. "It shall not be read. Jailor, take him away. I'll see whether he or I shall be master."

So he was taken away, but being soon called in again, he renewed his demand for the mittimus to be read; which at length was done by a Friend, one of his fellow-prisoners, and the whole court listened in silence, for the people were eager to hear it.

The mittimus, signed by Peter Ceely, stated that the prisoners "Had spread several papers tending to the disturbance of the public peace, and could not render any lawful cause for coming into those parts, being persons altogether unknown, having no pass for travelling up and down the country, and refusing to give security for their good behaviour, according to the law in that behalf provided, and refused to take the oath of abjuration," &c.

When the reading was ended, George Fox made his defence as follows:

"Thou that sayest thou art Chief Justice of England, and you justices, know that, if I had put in sureties, I might have gone whither I pleased, and have carried on the design (if I

had had one) which Major Ceely hath charged me with. And if I had spoken those words to him, which he hath here declared, judge ye whether bail or mainprize could have been taken in that case." Then turning his speech to Major Ceely, he said, "When or where did I take thee aside? Was not thy house full of rude people, and thou as rude as any of them, at our examinations; so that I asked for a constable, or some other officer, to keep the people civil? But if thou art my accuser, why sittest thou on the bench? It is not the place of accusers to sit with the judge. Thou oughtest to come down, and stand by me, and look me in the face. Besides, I would ask the judge and justices, 'Whether or no Major Ceely is not guilty of this treason, which he charges against me, in concealing it so long as he hath done? Does he understand his place, either as a soldier, or a justice of the peace? For he tells you here, 'That I went aside with him, and told him what a design I had in hand, and how serviceable he might be for my design: that I could raise forty thousand men in an hour's time, bring in King Charles, and involve the nation in blood.' He saith, moreover, 'He would have aided me out of the country, but I would not go; and therefore he committed me to prison, for want of sureties for good behaviour,' as the mittimus declares. Now, do you not see plainly, that Major Ceely is guilty of this plot and treason he talks of, and hath made himself a party to it, by desiring me to go out of the country, demanding bail of me, and not charging me with this pretended treason till now, nor discovering it. But I deny and abhor his words, and am innocent of his devilish design."

The judge, seeing that Major Ceely had ensnared himself, and that his accusation was false, took no further notice of it.

Major Ceely, (to the judge,)—"If it please you, my lord, to hear me: this man struck me and gave me such a blow, as I never had in my life."

George Fox. "Major Ceely, art thou a justice of the peace, and a major of a troop of horse, and tellest the judge

in the face of the court and country, that I, a prisoner, struck thee, and gave thee such a blow as thou never hadst the like in thy life? What! art thou not ashamed? Prithee, Major Ceely, where did I strike thee? and who is thy witness for that?"

MAJOR CEELY. "It was in the castle green, and Captain Bradden was standing by when you struck me."

GEORGE FOX. "I desire the judge to let him produce his witness; and I call upon Major Ceely to come down from the bench. It is not fit that the accuser should sit as judge, over the accused."

MAJOR CEELY. "Captain Bradden is my witness."

GEORGE FOX. "Speak, Captain Bradden, didst thou see me give him such a blow?"

The captain was silent, but bowed his head.

GEORGE FOX. "Nay, speak up and let the court and country hear, let not bowing of the head serve thy turn. If I have done so, let the law be inflicted on me. I fear not sufferings or death itself, for I am an innocent man concerning all his charge."

But the captain still remained silent. The judge, finding the accusations were groundless, but being determined to wreak his vengeance on the prisoners, fined them twenty marks apiece for not putting off their hats, and remanded them to jail, until the fine should be paid.

At night Captain Bradden, accompanied by seven or eight justices, came to see them. The visitors were very civil, and said they believed neither the judge, nor any in the court, gave credit to the charges of Major Ceely. The following discourse ensued.

CAPTAIN BRADDEN, (to George Fox.) "Major Ceely had an intent to take away your life, if he could have got another witness."

GEORGE FOX. "Why didst not thou witness for me, or against me, seeing Major Ceely produced thee for a witness, that thou sawest me strike him?"

Captain Bradden. "Why, when Major Ceely and I came by you, as you were walking in the castle green, he put off his hat to you, and said, 'How do you do, Mr. Fox?' Then you said to him, 'Major Ceely, take heed of hypocrisy and of a rotten heart, for when came I to be thy master, and thou, my servant? Do servants use to cast their masters into prison?' This was the great blow he meant that you gave him."

The report of their trial having spread abroad, many, who admired their fearless deportment and blameless characters, were induced to visit them in prison, which afforded an opportunity to promulgate their doctrines more extensively.

CHAPTER XI.

State Prisons—George Fox in Doomsdale—He is released—Goes to Exeter, and meets with J. Nayler—Delusion of Nayler—His trial and punishment—His restoration and death—His dying expressions—George Fox attends meetings at Bristol in an orchard—Returns to London—Has two interviews with Cromwell—Travels in most parts of the nation—Great numbers of Friends in prison—George Fox's letters to Friends—General meetings of Friends.

1656.

So great has been the improvement in the construction and discipline of prisons, since the middle of the 17th century, that we can with difficulty realize the sufferings then endured by those faithful servants of Christ, who, immured in the noisome jails of England, were often the victims of intolerance. The persecution of the Friends, however, has been made instrumental, by an overruling Providence, to prepare the way for a more humane treatment of prisoners. Being thus made acquainted with the horrors of those pestilential abodes, their sympathies were excited for the criminals confined in them; and they were led by a sense of religious duty

to become pioneers in the work of prison reform, which has since extended its influence throughout the civilized world.*

George Fox and his companions, on being remanded to Lanceston jail, with no prospect of a speedy release, sent their horses into the country, and determined no longer to pay the jailor for their board. Upon this, he became very abusive, and thrust them into a dungeon called Doomsdale, where criminals were usually kept after sentence, to await their execution. This was a horribly filthy place; so noisome that few who went into it ever came out in health. Here, being without beds, or even straw to lie on—standing in mire and filth to the top of their shoes, and prevented by the jailor from cleansing their cell,—we may readily conceive that their patience was sorely tried.

The head jailor was a thief, and had been burnt in the hand. His wife, too, as also the under jailor and his wife, had been branded in the same manner. The jail belonged to Colonel Bennet, a Baptist preacher, who had purchased it with the lands belonging to the castle, and had placed this head jailor there. Some of the prisoners were talking of the spirits that haunted Doomsdale, and of the numbers who had died in it. George Fox told them, "If all the spirits and devils in hell were there, he was over them in the power of God, and feared no such things; for Christ, our priest, would sanctify the walls of the house to us; he who bruised the head of the devil."

When the general quarter sessions was come, they drew up an account of their suffering condition, and sent it to the court. The justices gave order "that Doomsdale door should be opened, and that they should have liberty to cleanse it, and buy their meat in the town." The imprisoned Friends also sent an account of their cruel treatment to the Protector, who ordered Captain Fox, the governor of Pendennis castle, to inquire into it, and they were soon after removed from Doomsdale to another chamber. Hugh Peters, one of Crom-

* See Dissertation on Testimonies.

well's chaplains, told him, "They could not do George Fox a greater service for the spreading of his principles in Cornwall, than to imprison him there." This proved to be the case, for many came to visit him and his companions; and at length, they had liberty to walk in the castle green, where large companies gathered on First-days, to whom they preached the gospel with freedom and success.

In Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Somersetshire, so many persons embraced the principles of Friends, that the priests and their adherents became exasperated, and instigated the magistrates to greater severity. They set watchers in the streets and highways, under pretence of taking up suspicious persons, but in reality to arrest the Friends who came to visit their imprisoned brethren. Some they robbed and detained from their homes, others they whipped or cast into prison; even respectable women were searched and treated with indignity. George Fox thus relates the method he took to administer a rebuke to one of his persecutors: "A young man coming to see us, I drew up all the gross, inhuman, and unchristian actions of the mayor, gave it him, and bade him seal it up, and go out again the back way; and then come into the town through the gates. He did so, and the watch took him up, and carried him before the mayor, who presently searched his pockets and found the letter; wherein he saw all his actions characterized; which shamed him so, that from that time he meddled little with the Lord's servants." He also addressed a letter of "exhortation and warning to the magistrates," showing that, although they pretended to advance liberty of conscience, they were in reality the worst of persecutors.

During the spring or summer of 1656, he makes the following record in his Journal: "While I was in prison here, the Baptists and Fifth-monarchy men prophesied, 'That this year, Christ should come, and reign on earth a thousand years.' And they looked upon this reign to be outward: when he was come inwardly in the hearts of his people, to

reign and rule; where these professors would not receive him. So they failed in their prophecy and expectation, and had not the possession of him. But Christ is come, and doth dwell and reign in the hearts of his people. Thousands at the door of whose hearts he hath been knocking, have opened to him; and he is come in, and doth sup with them, and they with him; the heavenly supper with the heavenly and spiritual man. So many of these Baptists and monarchy people turned the greatest enemies to the followers of Christ; but he reigns in the hearts of his saints over all their envy."

About this time, he addressed a letter to Friends in the gospel ministry, exhorting them to faithfulness in their high calling. "The ministers of the spirit," he says, "must minister to the spirit that is in prison, which hath been in captivity in every one; that with the spirit of Christ, people may be led out of captivity up to God, the Father of spirits, to serve him, and have unity with him, with the scriptures, and one with another. This is the word of the Lord to you all, a charge to you all in the presence of the living God: Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your life and conduct may preach among all sorts of people, and to them."

While he was in prison, a Friend went to Cromwell and offered himself, body for body, to lie in Doomsdale in his stead. The Protector did not accept the offer, for he said, "It was contrary to law;" but it made a deep impression on him, and turning to the members of his council, he inquired, "Which of you would do so much for me, if I were in the same condition?" Sometime afterward, he sent down Major General Desborough to set George Fox and his companions at liberty, on certain conditions. When he came, he offered to release them, "If they would promise to go home and preach no more." This they declined. He then urged that they should promise, "To go home if the Lord permitted." But they were unwilling to come under any engagement that would, in the least degree, compromit their religious liberty.

They wrote him two letters assigning their reasons, and he left the matter in charge of Colonel Bennet who had command of the jail. He offered them then their liberty, if they would pay the jailor's fees; but they answered, "We can give the jailor no fees, for we are innocent sufferers. How can you expect fees of us, who have suffered so long wrongfully?"

At length, they were released, unconditionally, on the 13th of the seventh month, (September, O. S.) 1656, after they had been eight months in prison. The jailor, who had treated them so cruelly, was, the next year, turned out of his place, and for some act of wickedness was cast into jail himself, where he asked alms of the Friends. Being unruly in prison, he was, by his successor, put into Doomsdale, locked in irons, and told "To remember how he had abused those good men, whom he had wickedly, without cause, cast into that noisome prison."

On being released from Lanceston jail, George Fox and his companions resumed their travels, and their labours in the gospel ministry. They first went to Humphrey Lower's, who had visited them in prison, and had embraced their principles. He received them with joy, and they had a precious meeting in his house, where "many were convinced and turned by the spirit of the Lord," to his own inward teaching. After holding several good meetings (one of which, being unusually large, was held in an orchard), they returned to Lanceston, to visit the Friends' meeting which had been gathered in that place during their imprisonment.

Leaving this little company well "established on Christ, their rock and foundation," they proceeded on their way, and came to Exeter, where many Friends were in prison, one of whom was James Nayler. He had been an eminent instrument in the Lord's hand, to preach the word of life, and gather many to his spiritual worship; but, through unwatchfulness, and listening to the siren voice of flattery, he had become exalted in imagination, and was now under the influence of a mournful delusion. His condition being imme-

diately perceived by George Fox, when he visited the prisoners at Exeter, was cause of much solicitude, and he twice admonished him of his danger. James Nayler slighted his counsel, but would have come and kissed him, which he refused, saying, "Since thou hast turned against the power of God, I cannot receive thy show of kindness."

During Nayler's imprisonment at Exeter, three silly and deluded women, who had become his worshippers, knelt down before him and kissed his feet. After his liberation from prison, he rode through the suburbs of Bristol, accompanied by the same women, and by a man equally infatuated. The latter went before him bare-headed, one of the women led his horse, and the others spread their scarfs and handkerchiefs before him, while they cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts, hosannah in the highest!"* When they arrived in the city, they were examined by the magistrates, and committed to prison. The following letter was found in possession of James Nayler when he was examined: viz.

George Fox to James Nayler.

"James, thou must bear thy own burden, and thy company's with thee; whose iniquity doth increase, and by thee is not cried against. Thou hast satisfied the world, yea, their desires which they looked for. Thou and thy disciples, and the world, are joined against the truth, it is manifest through your wilfulness and stubbornness; and this is the word of the Lord God to thee. Many did not expect that thou wouldst have been an encourager of such as do cry against the power and life of truth, but wouldst have been a nourisher of truth, and not have trained up a company against it. And what is that which doth fulfil the world's prophecy, and their desires? Therefore consider, and search thyself, if this be innocency. The light of God in you all I own, but this I judge.

GEORGE FOX."†

---

* Sewel's Hist.

† Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, No. XVIII.

James Nayler, being accused of blasphemy, was carried to London to be examined by the Parliament, and thus he became an object of general notoriety and animadversion. After a tedious examination before a committee of Parliament, although there was no proof of the crime alleged, he was sentenced to stand two hours in the pillory at Westminster, to be whipped through the streets of London, from Westminster to the old Exchange, to be there set in the pillory two hours more, to have his tongue bored through with a hot iron, and his forehead branded with the letter B. Then to be taken to Bristol, carried through the streets on horseback, with his face backward, whipped again, and then committed to Bridewell prison, London, placed at hard labour, and secluded from all society, until released by Parliament.

That the Parliament of Great Britain should have spent twelve days in examining such a case of mental delusion, indicates a state of morbid feeling on the part of the members; but that it should have passed a sentence so cruel and vindictive, shows that, with all their professions of sanctity, they were strangers to the benign spirit of the gospel. It has been justly remarked by the editor of Neal's History of the Puritans, "That Nayler should have been assigned over to a physician for the cure of his madness, and not to the executioner of public justice, to be punished." The Society of Friends had, from the first of Nayler's aberrations, endeavoured to reclaim him, and being unsuccessful in this, they publicly declared their disunity with him. There were, however, a few Friends who adhered to him, and probably all sympathized with him in his sufferings. A large number of respectable citizens of London, of different religious persuasions, thinking the severity of his sentence entirely disproportioned to the grade of his offence, petitioned Parliament on his behalf, but without success.

Early in the winter of 1656, a part of the sentence was executed. After standing on the pillory two hours, he was stripped, and whipped at the cart's tail through the streets of

London, until he received 310 stripes, lacerating his back from his shoulders to his waist, which he bore with surprising patience. The remainder of the sentence being deferred on account of his illness, a second petition, numerously signed, praying that it might be remitted, was presented at the bar of the House by about a hundred persons. This application proving ineffectual, they appealed to Cromwell himself, to arrest the further execution of the sentence, which he seemed inclined to do; but it was thought the preachers who surrounded him used their influence to prevent it.*

After waiting nine days for him to regain his strength, the remainder of the sentence was executed, and so great was the sympathy felt for him, that during the boring of his tongue and the branding of his forehead, the thousands of spectators, with one consent, uncovered their heads, and looked on in silent commiseration. He endured his sufferings with great patience, but his mind continued for some time partially clouded. He was detained two years in Bridewell, during which time he was brought to a sense of his errors, and became truly penitent. After his release, he went to Bristol, where, in a public meeting, he made confession of his offence, and spoke so feelingly as to bring the whole audience to tears. He also wrote and published several papers of condemnation for his past errors, and of thanksgiving to God for his recovery.

The Society of Friends, believing that his repentance was sincere, and that he was indeed restored to favour and communion with God, could do no less than receive him again as a member of their body.

He lived only about two years after his restoration, during which he walked in great humility and circumspection, and ended his course in peace, in the autumn of 1660, in the 44th year of his age. About two hours before his death, he spoke to several Friends who were attending him, in the following beautiful and pathetic language:

* Sewel's Hist., I. 182.

"There is a spirit which I feel, that delights to do no evil, nor to revenge any wrong, but delights to endure all things, in hope to enjoy its own in the end: Its hope is to outlive all wrath and contention, and to weary out all exaltation and cruelty, or whatever is of a nature contrary to itself. It sees to the end of all temptations: as it bears no evil in itself, so it conceives none in thoughts to any other: If it be betrayed it bears it; for its ground and spring are the mercies and forgiveness of God. Its crown is meekness, its life is everlasting love unfeigned, and it takes its kingdom with entreaty, and not with contention, and keeps it by lowliness of mind. In God alone it can rejoice, though none else regard it or own its life. It is conceived in sorrow, and brought forth without any to pity it; nor doth it murmer at grief and oppression. It never rejoiceth but through sufferings; for with the world's joy it is murdered. I found it alone being forsaken; I have fellowship therein, with them who lived in dens, and desolate places in the earth, who through death obtained this resurrection and eternal holy life."*

From various historical accounts and anecdotes that have come down to us, it appears that he was endowed with most extraordinary powers, as a minister of the gospel, and with a deep insight into the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom. His temptations and his fall should be a warning to all who are similarly circumstanced, not to give ear to the delusive voice of adulation, nor to relax or grow weary, in the solemn duty of "watching unto prayer." His repentance and restoration to peace of mind and unity with his friends, are no less instructive to us, as incentives to labour for the return of the lost sheep, who have wandered from the fold, for there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

George Fox, after leaving Exeter, visited the meetings of Friends until he came to Bristol. On First-day morning, he attended their meeting, which was large and quiet. In the

* J. Nayler's Works, 668, and Sewel's Hist. 202–3.

afternoon, he held a meeting near the city, in an orchard which was often used for that purpose. On this occasion, some thousands were in attendance. On his way to the orchard, he was told that Paul Gwin, a noisy disputant, who often disturbed their meetings, would be there with his rude company. He replied, "Never heed; it is nothing to me who goes to it." On reaching the meeting, he mounted upon a stone from which Friends usually addressed the audience, and, putting off his hat, he stood for some time in silence. Gwin attempted to make a disturbance, and after objecting to the long hair of George Fox, he exclaimed, "Ye wise men of Bristol, I strange that you will stand here, and hear a man speak and affirm that which he cannot make good." George Fox said to the people, "Did you ever see me, or hear me speak before? Take notice, what kind of a man is this, who so impudently asserts that I spoke and affirmed that which I could not make good; and yet neither he nor you ever heard or saw me before. Therefore, that is a lying, envious, malicious spirit which speaks in him; it is of the devil, and not of God." He then commanded Gwin to be still, which he obeyed, and an opportunity was afforded to preach the gospel with authority and remarkable success. "For many hours he declared the word of life, opening to them the types, figures, and shadows of Christ, in the time of the law, and showing that Christ was come, and had ended the types, shadows, tithes, and oaths, and put down swearing, and had set yea and nay instead of it, and a free ministry; for he was now come to teach his people himself, and his heavenly day was springing from on high." He adds, "The meeting broke up quietly, and the Lord's power and glory shined over all; a blessed day it was, and the Lord had the praise."

In this instance, and many others, it is remarkable how the authority with which he was clothed by his divine master, enabled him to subdue the turbulent spirits of those who disturbed the meetings of Friends. No sooner did he begin to speak, than the tumultuous waves of passion subsided, and

thousands stood as silent listeners to his persuasive and powerful ministry.

Leaving Bristol, he passed on his way, holding large meetings, until he came to London. On entering the city, he saw a concourse of people near Hyde Park, and approaching it, he espied the Protector coming in his coach. He rode up to the coach-side, which the guards would have prevented, but Cromwell, seeing him, encouraged his approach. He then, being impelled by a sense of duty, spoke to the Protector concerning his condition, and laid before him the sufferings of Friends, showing him "how contrary this persecution was to Christ and his apostles, and to Christianity." Cromwell, at parting, desired him to come to his house, and, on reaching the palace, said to one of his wife's maids, whose name was Mary Saunders, "That he could tell her good news." She asked what it was. He answered, "George Fox is come to town." She being a Friend, replied, "That is good news, indeed."

Accompanied by Edward Pyot, George Fox soon after went to Whitehall, where they had an interview with the Protector, who had with him Doctor Owen, Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. "We were moved," he writes in his Journal, "to speak to Oliver Cromwell concerning the sufferings of Friends, and laid them before him: and directed him to the light of Christ, who had enlightened every man that cometh into the world. He said it was a natural light; but we showed him the contrary; and manifested that it was divine and spiritual, proceeding from Christ, the spiritual and heavenly man; and that which was called the life in Christ the Word, was called the light in us. The power of the Lord God rose in me, and I was moved in it to bid him lay down his crown at the feet of Jesus. Several times I spoke to him to the same effect. I was standing by the table, and he came and sat upon the table's side by me, saying, 'He would be as high as I was;' and so continued speaking against the light of Christ Jesus; and went his way in a light manner. But the Lord's power

came over him, so that when he came to his wife, and other company, he said, 'I never parted so from them before;' for he was judged in himself."

On leaving the Protector, they found themselves in company with many officers, and other persons of distinction. One of these began to speak against the doctrine of "The Light of Christ," whereupon George Fox felt bound, "To slight him for speaking so lightly of the things of God." A bystander remarked to him, that he was speaking to the Major-General of Northamptonshire. "What!" said George, "our old persecutor, that has persecuted and sent so many of our Friends to prison, and is a shame to christianity and religion? I am glad I have met with thee!" He then went on to reprove him sharply, for his unchristian conduct. The General, being conscious that the reproof was just, withdrew without resenting it. This undaunted boldness, was a remarkable trait in the character of Fox, who did not fear the face of man, when he believed himself called to rebuke "spiritual wickedness in high places."

After attending the meetings of Friends, in and around London, he resumed his travels in the country, and during the year 1656, visited most parts of the nation. His doctrines were now widely spread, and being misrepresented by the clergy and their adherents, he found it his duty to answer their objections, both in his public ministry, and by means of the press. "For they applied to the Friends, what Christ has said of false prophets and anti-christs coming in the last days." . . "Therefore," he says, "I was moved to open this through the nation, and to show, that they who said we were the false prophets, anti-christs and deceivers that should come in the last days, were indeed themselves they. For when Christ told his disciples, that false prophets and anti-christs should come in the last times, and if possible should deceive the very elect, he said, 'By their fruits ye shall know them;' for they should be inwardly ravening wolves, having the sheep's clothing." . . . . "These have gotten the dragon's

power; the murdering, destroying, persecuting power; And these are they that the world wonders after! These have drunk the blood of the martyrs, prophets and saints, and persecuted the true church into the wilderness! These have set up the false, compelling worships, and have drunk the blood of the saints, that will not drink of their cup!"

In his Journal he says, "In this year, (1656,) the truth was finely planted over the nation, and many thousands were turned to the Lord; insomuch that there were seldom fewer than one thousand in prison in this nation, for truth's testimony, some for tithes, some for going to steeple-houses, some for contempts as they were called, some for not swearing, and others for not putting off their hats," &c. In order to encourage his friends to keep up their meetings, he wrote to them as follows:

"Dear Friends:—Keep all your meetings in the power of the Lord, which is over all that which is in the fall, and must have an end. * * * * For the gospel being the power of God, is pure and everlasting. Know it to be your portion; in which is stability, life, and immortality, shining over that which darkens the mortal. So be faithful every one to God in your measures of his power and life, that ye may answer God's love and mercy to you, as obedient children of the Most High; dwelling in love, unity, peace, and innocency of heart towards one another, that God may be glorified in you, and you kept faithful witnesses for him, and valiant for the truth in the earth. God Almighty preserve you all to his glory, that you may feel his blessing among you, and that you may be possessors thereof.

George Fox."

In the meetings of Friends, at this time, many who were young in religious experience sometimes felt constrained to utter a few words in thanksgiving and praises to God; and George Fox, feeling sympathy with them, as well as desirous that no disturbance might thence arise in their solemn assemblies, addressed to the society a letter of advice, which is

characteristic of his wisdom and paternal care.* He says: "All my dear friends in the noble seed of God, who have known his power, life, and presence among you, let it be your joy to hear or see the springs of life break forth in any; through which ye have all unity in the same feeling, life, and power. And above all things, take heed of judging any openly in your meetings, except they be openly profane or rebellious." * * * * "And, friends, though ye may have been convinced, and have tasted of the power, and felt the light, yet afterwards ye may feel a winter storm, tempest, and hail, frost and cold, and temptation in the wilderness. Be patient and still in the power and in the light that doth convince you, to keep your minds to God; in that be quiet, that ye may come to the summer; that your flight be not in the winter. For if ye sit still in the patience which overcomes in the power of God, there will be no flying. The husbandman, after he hath sown his seed, is patient. And ye, by the power being kept in the patience, will come by the light to see through and feel over winter storms and tempests, and all the coldness, barrenness, and emptiness; and the same light and power will go over the tempter's head; which power and light was before he was. So, in the light standing still, ye will see your salvation, ye will see the Lord's strength, ye will see the small rain, ye will feel the fresh springs, your minds being kept low in the power and light: for that which is out of the power lifts up. But in the power and light ye will feel God, revealing his secrets, inspiring your minds, and his gifts coming in unto you; through which your hearts will be filled with God's love, and praises to him that lives for evermore; for in his light and power his blessing is received. So in that, the eternal power of the Lord Jesus Christ preserve and keep you! Live every one in the power of God, that ye may all come to be heirs of that, and know that to be your portion; even the kingdom that hath no end, and the endless

*See Dissertation on Discipline—Meetings for worship.

life which the seed is heir of. Feel that set over all, which hath the promise and blessing of God forever.

GEORGE FOX."

In this year were held three general meetings of Friends, for worship and conference, being the earliest meetings of this kind, of which we have any record. One was at Ringwood, in Hampshire, which George Fox says was largely attended, and favoured with the evidence of the Lord's power. Another was at Balby, in Yorkshire, from which a number of advices were issued, addressed "To the brethren in the north." This document refers to most of the points which now form the chief subjects of Friends' discipline.* A third of the same kind was held at Exeter, in Devonshire, which is mentioned by George Fox, as a blessed, heavenly meeting.

During this year he addressed many epistles to Friends, in which he exhorted them to faithfulness in all their duties, instructed them how to conduct their religious meetings, encouraged them to be patient under their sufferings, and especially enjoined upon them all, "To dwell in the everlasting seed of God," the manifestation of divine life and power in the soul.†

---

* London Book of Extracts.

† George Fox's Works, VII. 114 to 132.

CHAPTER XII.

Visit to Wales — Meets with John Ap-John, and Thomas Holmes — Tumult at Brecknock — Meetings in Wales — Returns to Chester — Cromwell's proclamation for a fast — George Fox again in Wales — Great meetings and remarkable sermon — Controversy with a priest —Dispute with a governor—John Ap-John imprisoned and released —Vision of George Fox—Return to Liverpool —To Manchester—To Swarthmore —Attends a General Meeting — Large meeting at Langlands—J. Wilkinson convinced—Epistle to Friends concerning blacks and Indian slaves.

1657.

In the early part of this year George Fox visited Wales, where some proselytes to his doctrines had already been made, through the ministry of others. About three years prior to this date, a clergyman of Wrexham, in Wales, having heard reports concerning the Friends, sent two of his congregation into the north of England, to inquire into their principles. These "triers," as they were termed, remained some time, and were so well satisfied with the doctrines of Friends, that they embraced them. One of them afterwards relinquished the profession, but the other, whose name was John Ap-John, continued faithful, and became a useful minister of the gospel.

The first town visited by George Fox in this journey, was Cardiff, where a justice of the peace sent an invitation for "him and half-a-dozen Friends to come to his house." He accordingly went, accompanied by one or two of his friends, and they were kindly entertained. The next day, they had a meeting in the Town Hall, to which the justice sent seventeen of his family, and although some disturbers were there, "the Lord's power was over all," and many were gathered to his name.

At Swansea he was instrumental in settling a meeting of

Friends, and passing on from thence he came to Brecknock, where he met with Thomas Holmes and John Ap-John. Here leaving his company, he walked forth into the fields, and John Ap-John went into the streets to preach to the people. When George Fox returned, he found the town "in an uproar," and the inn full of people, who were earnestly talking in Welsh. He desired them to speak English, which they did, and he had much discourse with them on religious subjects. Towards night, the magistrates appeared in the streets with a multitude of people, whom they incited to shout; and for about two hours they kept up a continual clamour, which reminded the Friends of the uproar among the craftsmen of Diana at Ephesus. Next morning George Fox wrote a paper addressed to the citizens, concerning their unchristian conduct, "showing them the fruits of their priests and magistrates," and, as he rode out of town, he spoke to the people, telling them "They were a shame to Christianity and religion."

At the next place they reached, he was more favourably received, and had a great meeting in a public burying ground, at which a priest and two magistrates were present. It was a peaceable, satisfactory opportunity, and many were convinced of the principles of Friends. One of the justices said to George Fox, "You have this day given great satisfaction to the people, and answered all the objections that were in their minds."

After holding a large and satisfactory meeting at Point-y-moyle, he returned to England and held a meeting in Cheshire, at which two or three thousand were present, and where the word of life was held forth, and "Friends were settled by the power of God, upon Jesus Christ the rock and foundation."

At this time, there being a great drought, Cromwell issued a proclamation for a fast throughout the nation, to pray for rain. This coming to the knowledge of George Fox, he published a paper, "To show the distinction betwixt the true and the false fasts," in which he maintains "That the acceptable

fast and day to the Lord, is not for a man to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth under him, and to fast for strife and debate," but it is, 'To break the bonds of iniquity, to deal his bread to the hungry, to bring the poor that are cast out to his own house, and when he sees the naked to cover him."

Returning into Wales, he passed through Montgomeryshire into Radnorshire, where there was a meeting "like a leaguer for multitudes," which many of the gentry attended. While the people were assembling, he desired John Ap-John to go to them, and "if he had any thing upon him from the Lord to them," he might speak in Welsh, and thereby gather more together. When the people were collected, George Fox went into the meeting, and having stood upon a chair for awhile in silence, he then addressed the audience for nearly three hours, with remarkable effect. He says, "I felt the power of the Lord over the whole assembly: and his everlasting life and truth shined over all. The scriptures were opened to them, and the objections they had in their minds answered. They were directed to the light of Christ, the heavenly man; that by it they might see their sins, and Christ Jesus to be their Saviour, their Redeemer, their Mediator, and come to feed upon him the bread of life from heaven. Many were turned to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his free teachings that day; and all were bowed down under the power of God; so that though the multitude was so great, that many sat on horseback to hear, there was no opposition."

Thence he proceeded to Leominster, in Herefordshire, where he had a "great meeting in a close, many hundreds of people being gathered," among whom were six congregational preachers. After he had preached at considerable length, and with great effect, a Baptist who was convinced cried out, "Where's priest Tombs? How chance he doth not come out?" This Tombs was an Anabaptist minister, who had got possession of the living and parsonage at Leominster. He soon after made his appearance, accompanied by the bailiffs

and other officers of the town. George Fox was speaking of the heavenly divine Light, which enlightens every one that comes into the world.

PRIEST TOMBS. "That's a natural light and a made light."

GEORGE FOX. "Let the people take out their bibles. Now I ask thee, Priest Tombs, whether that was a created, natural, made light, which John, a man sent from God, bore witness to, when he said, 'In him (to wit.: in the Word) was life, and that life was the light of men?'"

PRIEST TOMBS. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "The natural, created light is the outward light in the firmament, proceeding from the sun, moon, and stars. And dost thou affirm that God sent John to bear witness to the light of the sun, moon, and stars?"

PRIEST TOMBS. "Did I say so?"

GEORGE FOX. "Didst thou not say it was a natural, created light which John bore witness to? If thou dost not like thy words, take them again and mend them."

PRIEST TOMBS. "I said the light *you* spoke of was a natural, created light."

GEORGE FOX. "Let the people turn to the text in their bibles, John i. 1.: 'In the beginning was the Word,' &c. 'All things were made by him.' So all natural, created lights were made by Christ the Word. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' He saith of himself, 'I am the light of the world.' And God said of him by the prophet Isaiah, 'I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.' So Christ in light is saving. And the apostle said, 'The light which shined in their hearts was to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which was their treasure in their earthen vessels.'"

PRIEST TOMBS, (to the magistrates). "Take this man away, or else I shall not speak any more."

GEORGE FOX. "Priest Tombs! deceive not thyself, thou

art not in thy pulpit now, nor in thy old mass-house, but we are in the fields."

At this juncture, Thomas Taylor, who had been a clergyman, but was now a minister among Friends, rose and undertook to prove their principle by Christ's parable of the sower, (Mat. 13.) Then the priest said, "Let this man speak, but not the other." Another Friend stood up and related how Tombs had sued him for the tithe of eggs. The priest replied, "I have a wife and I have a concubine; my wife is the baptized people, and my concubine is the world." "But the Lord's power," says George Fox, "was over all, the everlasting truth was declared that day, and many were turned by it to the Lord Jesus Christ, their teacher and way to God."

Travelling through South Wales, he came to Teuly, in Pembrokeshire, where, as he rode up the street, a justice of the peace stepped out from his door and desired him to alight and stay at his house, which he accordingly did. On First-day, they had "a glorious meeting," which was attended by the mayor and his wife, with others of the most respectable citizens. John Ap-John left the meeting, and went to the parish house of worship, where he was arrested by order of the governor and cast into prison.

Next morning, the governor sent one of his officers for George Fox, which grieved the mayor and justice, who concluded to wait on that functionary before him. When George came in, the following dialogue ensued:

George Fox. "Why hast thou cast my friend into prison?"

Governor. "For standing with his hat on in the church."

George Fox. "Had not the priest two caps on his head, a black one and a white one? Cut off the brim of the hat, and then my friend would have but one, and the brim of the hat was but to defend him from the weather."

Governor. "These are frivolous things."

George Fox. "Why then dost thou cast my friend into prison for such frivolous things?"

GOVERNOR. "Do you own election and reprobation?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes, and thou art in the reprobation."

GOVERNOR, (in an angry tone,) "I will send you to prison till you prove it."

GEORGE FOX. "I will prove it quickly, if thou wilt confess truth. Are not wrath, fury, rage, and persecution, marks of reprobation? He that was born of the flesh persecuted him that was born of the spirit, but Christ and his disciples never persecuted any."

GOVERNOR. "I acknowledge that I have too much wrath, haste, and passion in me."

GEORGE FOX. "Esau is up in thee, the first birth; not Jacob, the second birth."

The governor, being conscious that this was the truth, frankly acknowledged it, and, as George was going away, invited him to dinner, and set his friend at liberty. They went back to the house of the justice, and he, with the mayor, accompanied by their wives, and several other persons, went with the Friends to the water-side, about half a mile out of town. There George Fox "knelt down with them and prayed to the Lord to preserve them." After commending them to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and free teacher, he and his companions went on their way, ascribing praises to the Most High.

At Pembroke they had some religious service, and at Haverford-West their labours were so well received, that a Friends' meeting was established there. At the latter place, a fair being held, they went through it, preaching the gospel of Christ.

Coming into another county, they entered a great market-town, where George Fox halted at an inn, and John Ap-John went through the streets preaching to the people, which produced so great an excitement that he was arrested and cast into prison. Presently several of the principal citizens came to George Fox, and said, "They have cast your man into prison." "For what?" said he. "Because he preached in

our streets." "What did he say?" inquired George, "did he reprove the drunkards and swearers, and warn them to repent and leave off the evil of their ways, and turn to the Lord? Who cast him into prison?" They replied, "The high-sheriff, the justices, and the mayor." He asked their names, and said, "Is this their carriage to travellers who pass through their town, or to strangers who admonish them to fear the Lord, and who reprove sin in their gates?" This conversation being reported to the city authorities, they soon after sent up John Ap-John, guarded with halberds, in order to put him out of the town. George Fox bade the officers, "Take their hands off of him." They said, "The mayor and justices had told them to put him out of town." George replied, "That he would talk with their mayor and justices anon, concerning their uncivil and unchristian carriage towards him." He then told John to go and get their horses ready, and charged the officers not to touch him. This resolute bearing caused the officers to withdraw; and the travellers, after taking some refreshment, prepared to resume their journey. Before he left the town, George Fox rode up to the inn where the magistrates were, and reproved them for their unchristian conduct.

That night they came to a little inn, very poor, but very cheap; the whole charge for their own provision, and that of their horses, being but eight pence. The horses, however, refused to eat the oats, and their own entertainment was far from sumptuous. After passing through two large towns, where they preached in the market and in the streets, as they continued their journey, they were overtaken by a man of rank, who thought, at first, they were highwaymen, and purposed to have them arrested at the next town. But George Fox was impelled by a sense of duty to speak to him, which so effectually reached the witness for God in his own breast, that he invited them to his house, and entertained them kindly. He and his wife desired to be furnished with some scripture proofs of the doctrines of Friends; a service which George willingly undertook. As he dictated the passages,

their host wrote them down, and was convinced, both by the spirit of God in his own heart, and by the corroborating testimony of scripture.

Leaving this hospitable family, they came to a hill, said to be two or three miles high, from the top of which an extensive prospect was spread out before them. Here George Fox was favoured with a sense of spiritual vision, which enabled him to point out to his companion the several places where "God would raise up a people to himself, to sit down under his own teaching." These places were remembered by John Ap-John, and he lived to see the prediction fulfilled.

At Dolegelle, John again preached in the streets, which caused a great crowd to gather about him, among whom were two Independent ministers. They were both disputing with him at the same time, in Welsh, when George Fox coming up, told them "The things of God were weighty, and they should speak of them with fear and reverence." Then he desired them to speak in English, and they did so, affirming that "The light which John came to bear witness of, was a created and natural light." He took out his Bible, and showed them, after his usual manner, that "This light is the life in Christ, the Word, by which all things were made and created. The same that is called the life in Christ, is called the light in men." "This is an heavenly and divine light, which lets men see their evil words and deeds, and shows them all their sins, and if they would attend to it, would bring them to Christ, from whom it comes, that they might know him to save them from their sin, and blot it out."

The next town they visited was Caernarvon, a walled place like a castle. Here they preached to the people in the streets, by most of whom they were treated with civility, and George Fox commended them for their moderation and sobriety.

At Beaumaris they met with a very different reception. John Ap-John was soon cast into prison for street preaching, and George Fox was warned that "If he went into the street,

they would imprison him." Upon this, he was moved to go and walk up and down the streets. He told the people what an uncivil and unchristian thing they had done in casting his friend into prison, and he asked them whether they, who looked upon the scriptures to be their rule, had any example in the scriptures, from Christ or his apostles, for what they had done." John Ap-John was, after a short detention, set at liberty.

The following day they had to cross a wide ferry; but a rude company of persons, who were called gentlemen, having entered the boat before them, endeavoured to prevent their coming on board. George Fox rode to the side of the boat, and reproved them for "their unmanly and unchristian carriage." As he spoke, he leaped his horse into the boat amongst them, but the water being deep, John Ap-John could not get his horse on board. George, therefore, leaped his horse out again into the water; and they had to wait three hours for the return of the boat. It was two o'clock in the afternoon before they were taken on board, and they had forty-two miles to ride that evening, with only one groat in money between them, after paying their passage. Finding no accommodations on the road, except a little hay for their horses, they were under the necessity of riding all night, and about five o'clock in the morning, they came to a place within six miles of Wrexham, where that day they met with many Friends, and had "a glorious meeting."

At Wrexham, they found many rude people, but there were some who heard them attentively, and embraced the doctrines they taught. Next morning, George Fox was sent for by "one who was called a lady, and kept a preacher at her house." He went, but found both her and her preacher "very light and airy; too light to receive the weighty things of God." She came and asked him "if she should cut his hair." He bade her "cut down the corruptions in herself with the sword of the spirit of God," and after admonishing her to be more grave and sober, he withdrew.

From Wrexham he came to West Chester, and thence to Liverpool, having travelled through every county in Wales, preaching the gospel of Christ, which was embraced and adhered to by many.

On the top of a hill near Liverpool, he had a large meeting, which was favoured with the overshadowing wing of Divine goodness. From thence he came to Manchester, where he held a meeting, in which he was assailed by the rude populace with coals, clods, stones, and water, but finding they could not prevail on him to desist from preaching, they informed the justices then in session, who sent officers to bring him before them. He laid before the court, the rude treatment he had received from the people, and told them he had been haled out of the meeting contrary to the ordinance of government, which declares that "None shall be molested in their meetings who profess God and the Lord Jesus Christ." After some further discourse with the justices, they directed the constable to attend him to his lodgings, and there to secure him until the next morning. But he was released on the morrow, and suffered to proceed on his way. He now directed his course towards Swarthmore, and on the way had many precious meetings, two of which were general meetings of Friends.

At Swarthmore, he remained more than a week, visiting the neighbouring meetings. His friends rejoiced with him in the goodness of the Lord, and ascribed praises to Him whose eternal power had preserved his messenger and carried him through every danger. During this short respite from travel, at the hospitable mansion of Judge Fell, he wrote a paper to be circulated among the people, in which he expostulated with the professors of religion for their unchristian conduct in persecuting the Friends. He wrote also two epistles addressed to Friends, from one of which the following passages are selected:

"All Friends and brethren every where, now is the day of your trial, now is the time for you to be valiant, and to see

that the testimony of the Lord doth not fall. Now is the day for the exercise of your gifts, of your patience, and of your faith." . . . . . "And Friends, 'quench not the spirit, nor despise prophesying,' where it moves; neither hinder babes and sucklings from crying, Hosannah; for out of their mouths will God ordain strength. There were some in Christ's day that were against such, whom he reproved; and there were some in Moses' day who would have stopped the prophets in the camp, whom Moses reproved; and said, by way of encouragement to them, 'Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets.' So I say now to you. Therefore ye that stop it in yourselves, do not quench it in others, neither in babe nor suckling; for the Lord hears the cry of the needy, and the sighs and groans of the poor. Judge not that, nor the sighs and groans of the spirit, which cannot be uttered, lest ye judge prayer; for prayer as well lies in sighs and groans to the Lord, as otherwise."

Leaving Swarthmore, he came to John Audland's, in Westmoreland, where he attended a great meeting of Friends. Here, a man with a drawn sword designed to injure him, and attempted to press through the crowd; but the Friends stood so close that his wicked purpose was frustrated.

Travelling northward, and visiting meetings, he came to Strickland-Head, where he had a great meeting. Most of the gentry of that country being gathered at a horse-race not far distant, he "was moved to go and declare the truth to them." Passing on through Cumberland, and holding meetings, he came to Carlisle. At this place, the city authorities were accustomed to put Friends out of the town; but now, there being a great flood, he was suffered to hold a meeting without molestation.

At Langlands, in the same county, he attended a general meeting of Friends which was very large; for most of the people having forsaken the priests, the "steeple-houses" in some places stood unoccupied. John Wilkinson, who has already been mentioned in this narrative as a clergyman who

had three parishes under his care, had witnessed his congregations dwindling away, until they became so few that he left the house of public worship, and held a meeting at his own dwelling. Afterwards he set up a silent meeting; but very few persons attended it, for most of his hearers had joined the Friends. "Thus he held on," writes George Fox in his journal, "till he had not past half a dozen left; the rest still forsaking him, and coming away to Friends. At last, when he had so very few left, he would come to Pardsey-Crag (where Friends had a meeting of several hundreds of people, who were all come to sit under their Lord Jesus Christ's teaching), and he would walk about the meeting on the First-days, like a man that went about the commons to look for sheep. During this time, I came to Pardsey-Crag meeting; and he, with three or four of his followers yet left him, came to the meeting that day, and were all thoroughly convinced. After the meeting, Wilkinson asked me two or three questions, which I answered to his satisfaction; from that time he came amongst Friends, became an able minister, preached the gospel freely, and turned many to Christ's teaching. And after he had continued many years in the free ministry of Christ Jesus, he died in the year 1675."

During the year 1657, George Fox wrote many epistles in addition to those preserved in his Journal. One of them addressed "To Friends beyond the seas, that have blacks and Indian slaves," is here subjoined.* It contains the earliest intimation of a concern for the slaves, which we shall find more fully expressed by him at a subsequent period.

Dear Friends:—I was moved to write these things to you in all those plantations. God, that made the world, and all things therein, giveth life and breath to all, and they all have their life and moving, and their being in him, he is the God of the spirits of all flesh, and is no respecter of persons: but "whosoever feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accept-

* George Fox's Works, Vol. VII. p. 144.

ed of him." And he hath made all nations of one blood to dwell upon the face of the earth, and his eyes are over all the works of his hands, and seeth every thing that is done under the whole Heavens; and the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. And he causeth the rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust, and also he causeth the sun to shine upon the just and the unjust; and he commands to love all men, for Christ loved all, so that 'he died for sinners.' And this is God's love to the world; in giving his Son in to the world: 'that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.' And he doth 'enlighten every man, that cometh into the world' that they might believe in the Son. And the gospel is preached to every creature under heaven: which is the power that giveth liberty and freedom, and is glad tidings to every captivated creature under the whole heavens. And the word of God is in the heart and mouth, to obey and do it, and not for them to ascend or descend for it; and this is the word of faith which was and is preached. For Christ is given for a covenant to the people, and a light to the Gentiles, and to enlighten them, who is the glory of Israel and God's Salvation, to the ends of the earth: And so ye are to have the mind of Christ, and to be merciful, as your Heavenly Father is merciful.

GEORGE FOX."

CHAPTER XIII.

Visit to Scotland—Opposes the Calvinistic Doctrines—The curses of the clergy—Visits Leith—Edinburgh—Summoned before the Council—Ordered to leave the nation—Goes to Glasgow—Stirling—Perth—Rudely treated—Returns to Edinburgh—Leaves Scotland—Comes to New Castle—Durham—Attends a Yearly Meeting in Bedfordshire—Advice to Ministers—Convincement of Isaac and Mary Pennington—George Fox disputes with a Jesuit.

1657–8.

HITHERTO the religious labours of George Fox had been confined to England and Wales, but in the summer or autumn of 1657, he was led by a sense of duty to visit Scotland, where some meetings of Friends had already been established. The earliest of these meetings of which we have any account, were at Drumbowy and at Heads; both settled about the year 1653, through the ministry of Alexander Hamilton, a Scotchman. In the following year, that country was visited by Miles Halhead and James Lancaster, who preached at Dumfries, Leith, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Stirling.*

George Fox was accompanied in his journey by Robert Widders, who, he says, "was a thundering man against hypocrisy, deceit, and the rottenness of the priests." The first night after passing the border, they lodged at an inn. Here they were informed that an earl, who lived about a quarter of a mile distant, wished to see George Fox, and had requested to be informed if he should come into Scotland. This nobleman, they were told, had three draw-bridges leading to his house or castle, and it would be nine o'clock before the last bridge would be drawn. Finding they had time in the evening to visit him, they went and were cordially received. He told them he would have gone with them in their journey, but was

* Sewell, I. 124.

engaged to attend a funeral. After a friendly conversation with him, they returned to the inn.

Proceeding on their journey, they had meetings at Heads, Badcow, and Garshore, in which many were convinced of their principles, among whom was Lady Margaret Hambleton. In these meetings George Fox boldly opposed the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, then a favourite dogma of the Presbyterian church. He says, "Now the priests had frighted the people with the doctrine of election and reprobation, telling them 'that God had ordained the greatest part of men and women for hell; and that let them pray or preach, or sing, or do what they could, it was all to no purpose, if they were ordained for hell; that God had a certain number which were elected for heaven; and let them do what they would, as David, an adulterer, and Paul, a persecutor, yet elected vessels for heaven.' So the fault was not at all in the creature, less or more, but God ordained it so." He was led to open to the people the falseness and folly of these doctrines, showing that God had warned those that rebelled against his law, as, for example, Cain, Corah, and Balaam, and had said to Cain, "If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Their reprobation was the result of their disobedience. Does not Christ say, "Go preach the gospel to all nations." He died for all men, the ungodly as well as the godly, and he enlightens every man that cometh into the world, that through him they might all believe. "Now all that believe in the light of Christ as he commands, are in the election, and sit under the teaching of the grace of God, which brings their salvation. But such as turn from this grace into wantonness are in the reprobation; and such as hate the light are in the condemnation."

The promulgation of these views, and the increase of Friends' meetings, exasperated the Scotch clergy, who, when they heard of George Fox's arrival, cried out that "All would be spoiled, for," said they, "he had already spoiled all the honest men and women in England." So, according to

their own account, the worst were left to them. In order to arrest the spread of what they termed heresy, the clergy assembled and drew up a number of curses, to be read publicly in their congregations.

The first was, "Cursed is he that saith, 'Every man hath a light within him, sufficient to lead him to salvation: and let all the people say, Amen.'

"The second, 'Cursed is he that saith, Faith is without sin: and let all the people say, Amen.'

"The third, 'Cursed is he that denieth the Sabbath day: and let all the people say, Amen.'

"In this last they make the people curse themselves; for on the Sabbath day (which is the seventh day of the week, which the Jews kept by the command of God to them) they kept markets and fairs, and so brought the curse upon their own heads.

"As to the first, concerning the light, Christ saith, 'Believe in the light, that ye may become children of the light:' and, 'he that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth shall have everlasting life: he that believeth passes from death to life, and is grafted into Christ.' 'And ye do well,' saith the apostle, 'that ye take heed unto the light, that shines in the dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." So the light is sufficient to lead unto the day-star.

"As concerning faith, it is the gift of God: and every gift of God is pure. The faith which Christ is the Author of, is precious, divine, and without sin. This is the faith which gives victory over sin, and access to God; in which faith they please God."

About this time, the pastor of an Independent church in Scotland, became exceedingly exasperated against Friends and their doctrines, which he denounced from his pulpit. At length, as he was preaching one day, "he cursed the light," and immediately fell down senseless in his pulpit. By the

use of stimulants, he was resuscitated, but his intellect being clouded, he withdrew from his congregation, and never recovered entirely the use of his faculties.

At Leith, George Fox and his companion met with many officers of the army and their wives, some of whom embraced the principles of Friends. Among the proselytes at this place, were Edward Billing and his wife, who at that time lived apart. "She being reached by the Truth," says George Fox, "we sent for her husband, who came, and the Lord's power reached to them both; they joined together in it, and agreed to live together, in love and unity, as man and wife."

At Edinburgh, "many thousands were gathered together, with abundance of priests, about the burning of a witch;" and George Fox, being in the city, "was moved to declare the day of the Lord amongst them." He then went to Friends' meeting, where many rude people came, and some Baptists, who brought forward their logic and syllogisms, to oppose his doctrines. "He told them, that by this fallacious way of discoursing, they might make white seem black, and black seem white: as that because a cock had two legs, and each of them had two legs, therefore they were all cocks. Thus they might turn any thing to lightness and vanity; but it was not the way of Christ or his apostles to teach or reason after that manner. Hereupon they left the house, and the Friends had "a blessed meeting in the Lord's power which was over all."

The Presbyterian clergy having petitioned the National Council against George Fox, he was summoned to appear before it. At the time appointed, he presented himself, and was about to be conducted into the council-chamber, when his hat was taken off by the door-keeper. He asked "Why this was done? and who were there that he might not go in with his hat on? for he had worn it in the presence of the Protector." The door-keeper, however, hung up the hat, and ushered him into the council-chamber, when, after standing awhile in silence, he said, "Peace be among you. Wait in the fear of God, that ye may receive his wisdom from above,

by which all things were made and created; that by it ye may all be ordered, and may order all things under your hands to God's glory."

The discourse that ensued is thus related in his Journal. "They asked me, 'What was the occasion of my coming into that nation?' I told them I came to visit the seed of God, which had long lain in bondage under corruption; that all in the nation who professed the scriptures, the words of Christ, of the prophets and apostles, might come to the light, spirit, and power, which they were in who gave them forth; that in and by the spirit they might understand the scriptures, and know Christ and God aright, have fellowship with them, and one with another. They asked me 'Whether I had any outward business there?' I said 'Nay.' Then they asked me, 'How long I intended to stay in that country?' I told them 'I should say little to that; my time was not to be long; yet in my freedom in the Lord I stood, in the will of him that sent me.' Then they bid me withdraw; and the door-keeper took me by the hand, and led me forth.

"In a little time they sent for me again, and told me, 'I must depart the nation of Scotland by that day sevennight.' I asked them 'Why? what had I done? What was my transgression, that they passed such a sentence upon me, to depart out of the nation?' They told me 'They would not dispute with me.' I desired them to hear what I had to say to them. They said 'They would not hear me.' I told them 'Pharaoh heard Moses and Aaron, yet he was an heathen; and Herod heard John the Baptist; and they should not be worse than these.' But they cried 'Withdraw, withdraw!' Whereupon the door-keeper took me again by the hand, and led me out."

He returned to his inn, and continued in the city, visiting Friends, and preaching the gospel. During his stay, he wrote a letter to the council, expostulating with them for their unchristian conduct in banishing him, "an innocent man, who only sought their salvation and eternal good." After spend-

ing some time in Edinburgh, he returned to Heads, where Friends were under great sufferings from the intolerance of the clergy, who had excommunicated them, and interdicted the people from dealing with them, or supplying them with food or drink. Being thus debarred from selling their commodities, and from buying the necessaries of life, they were exposed to great privations. These uncharitable proceedings were, however, arrested by Colonel Ashfield, who was a justice of the peace for that county. He protected the Friends, and afterwards being convinced of their principles, he joined in communion with them, had a meeting at his house, and became a minister of the gospel.

At Glasgow, George Fox and his companion appointed a meeting, but none of the citizens attended. The guard at the gates took them before the governor, with whom they had much discourse; and then, after preaching to the people in the streets, they left the city. On going into the Highlands, they met with rude treatment. "The Highlanders," says George Fox, "were so devilish, that they had like to have spoiled us and our horses, for they ran at us with pitchforks; but through the Lord's goodness we escaped them, being preserved by his power."

At Stirling, they could get no meeting, for the hearts of the people were closed against them; but the next day after their arrival, there was a horse-race near the town, attended by a great concourse, and as they returned, George Fox, being always "instant in season," embraced the opportunity to preach the word of life amongst them.

Passing on through several towns, they came to Johnston's, now called Perth, where a very bitter spirit was manifested towards them, especially among the Baptists, who, finding they could not prevail by disputation, applied to the governor and obtained a company of foot-soldiers to expel them from the town. George Fox was now accompanied by Robert Widders, Alexander Parker, and James Lancaster. As they were guarded through the streets, "James Lancaster was

moved to sing with a melodious sound in the power of God," and George Fox preached the gospel to the people, who generally came out of their houses, so that the streets were filled with them. The soldiers were so much ashamed of the part they were required to act, that they said, "They had rather have gone to Jamaica, than to have guarded the Friends."

Being thus expelled, they proceeded on their way, and came to another market-town, where Edward Billing and many soldiers were quartered. Here they desired to hold a meeting, and were told by the military officers that they should have it in the Town Hall; but the magistrates, in order to prevent it, appointed a meeting there for public business. The officers and soldiery, disapproving of this proceeding, advised the Friends to hold their meetings in the Town Hall nevertheless. They answered, "No, by no means, for then it would be said we took the hall by force. We will go to the market-place." The others said, "It was market day." "So much the better," replied George Fox, "for we would have all people to hear the truth and know our principles." Accordingly they went, and Alexander Parker stood upon the market-cross with a bible in his hand, preaching to the soldiers and market people, but they paid little attention to his discourse. Presently, George Fox "was moved to stand up, and, with a loud voice, to proclaim the day of the Lord that was coming upon all sin and wickedness." This awakening call aroused the people, who came flocking from the Town Hall, and a large company was soon gathered around him, to whom the word of life was declared. "The people were turned," he says, "to the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for them, and had enlightened them, that with his light they might see their evil deeds, be saved from their sins by him, and might come to know him to be their teacher. But if they would not receive Christ and own him, it was told them that this light which came from him would be their condemnation." This discourse was well

received by many, and especially by the English troops who were quartered there.

Travelling on, they came to Leith, where the innkeeper told George Fox that the council at Edinburgh had granted a warrant to apprehend him, because he had not gone out of the nation at the expiration of seven days, according to their order. He replied, "If there were a cart-load of warrants, I do not regard them, for the Lord's power is over them all." Accordingly, he proceeded to Edinburgh, and went to the same inn where he had lodged before, but no one offered to molest him. After visiting his friends in that city, he returned to Johnston's, (Perth,) the town from which he had been recently banished. Here the Baptists, who had before caused his expulsion, sent him a challenge to dispute with him the next day. He replied that he would meet them at a house about half a mile out of town, at a certain hour. This course he pursued under an apprehension that they would again resort to their strong argument of military power. He waited for them at the appointed time and place, but they did not make their appearance.

Returning once more to Edinburgh, he went to the Friends' meeting on First-day, and notice of his coming having been given, it was attended by many officers and soldiers. It proved to be a precious meeting, for the grace of God was felt to reign among them in his glorious power.

On his homeward journey, he and his companion held a meeting at Dunbar, in the church-yard, which was largely attended by all classes, and graciously owned by the great Head of the church, who furnished his messengers with doctrine suited to the state of the people.

George Fox remarks in his Journal, "This was the last meeting I had in Scotland. The truth and the power of God were set over that nation, and many, by the power and spirit of God, were turned to the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour and teacher, whose blood was shed for them; and there is since a great increase, and great there will be in Scotland,

though the time may be far distant, at present. For when first I set my horse's feet upon Scottish ground, I felt the seed of God to sparkle about me, like innumerable sparks of fire. Not but that there is abundance of thick, cloddy earth of hypocrisy and falseness atop, and a briery, brambly nature, which is to be burned up with God's word, and ploughed up with his spiritual plough, before God's seed brings forth heavenly and spiritual fruit to his glory. But the husbandman is to wait in patience."

At Newcastle he wished to hold a meeting, and with that view waited on an alderman by the name of Ledger. This man, in conjunction with the priests, had published many books against Friends, who, they asserted, "would not come into any great towns, but lived in the fells, like butterflies." He reminded Ledger of this expression, adding, "Now we are come into your great town." But the permission he asked was not granted, and therefore the meeting was held on the other side of the Tyne at Gate-side, now called Gateshead, where a Friends' meeting was established.

At Durham he heard of a man who had lately come there for the purpose of establishing a college to prepare young men for the ministry. Accompanied by some others, he went to see this professor, and reasoned with him on the insufficiency of human learning to qualify men to preach the gospel. The man assented to most of the views advanced, was tender and affectionate, and, after some further consideration, relinquished his design.

Pursuing his journey, and attending meetings on his way, George Fox passed through Yorkshire to Hull, and thence by Pontefract and Scalehouse to Swarthmore.

He soon after returned into Yorkshire, and thence passed through Cheshire and Derbyshire to Nottingham. In this city he had a meeting with Rice Jones and his congregation, who were mostly persons that had been convinced of Friends' principles eight years before, but, through the influence of Jones, had been led astray. George Fox, after preaching to

the people, turned to Jones, and told him that he had been the means of leading some back again into the world, who had once renounced its vanities, and "that it was the serpent in him that had scattered and done hurt to such as were tender towards the Lord. Nevertheless, if he waited in the fear of God for the seed of the woman, Christ Jesus, to bruise the serpent's head in him, that had scattered and done the hurt; he might come to gather them again by this heavenly seed; though it would be a hard work for him to gather them again out of those vanities he had led them into." At this Rice Jones said, "Thou liest; it is not the seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head." "No?" said George Fox, "what is it, then?" "I say it is the law," said he. "But," answered George, "the scripture, speaking of the seed of the woman, saith 'It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;' now, hath the law a heel to be bruised?" Then he added, "This seed, Christ Jesus, the seed of the woman, which should bruise the serpent's head, shall bruise thy head, and break you all in pieces." This admonition was of great service, for many of Jones's company were restored to their former standing, and the others that would not be gathered, like the fruitless fig-tree, withered away.

From Nottingham he travelled through several counties, holding meetings, until he came to John Cook's, in Bedfordshire, "where a general yearly meeting for the whole nation was appointed to be held." This meeting, which continued several days, and was attended by many thousands of people, appears to have been in the spring of 1658. He writes in his Journal,—"Although there was some disturbance by some rude people that had run out from truth; yet the Lord's power came over all, and a glorious meeting it was. The everlasting gospel was preached, and many received it, which gospel brought life and immortality to light in them, and shined over all.

"I was moved by the power and spirit of the Lord to open unto them the 'promise of God,' that it was made to the seed,

not to seeds, as many, but to one; which seed was Christ: and that all people, both male and female, should feel this seed in them, which was heir of the promise; that so they might all witness Christ in them, the hope of glory, the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations, which was revealed to the apostles, and is revealed again now, after the long night of apostacy. So that all might come up into this seed, Christ Jesus, walk in it, and sit down together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus, who was the foundation of the prophets and apostles, the rock of ages, and is our foundation now. All sitting down in him, sit down in the substance, the first and the last, that changes not, the seed that bruises the serpent's head, which was before he was, who ends all the types, figures, and shadows, and is the substance of them all; in whom there is no shadow."

After speaking largely concerning the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom, he was led to address his discourse to those who were called to the gospel ministry. His views on this important subject, being taken down by one present, and preserved in his Journal, are worthy of attention by all who are engaged in that solemn service. "It is a weighty thing," he says, "to be in the work of the ministry of the Lord God, and to go forth in that. It is not a customary preaching. It is to bring people to the end of all outward preaching. For when ye have declared the truth to the people, and they have received it, and come into that which ye spoke of; the uttering of many words and long declarations out of the life, may beget them into a form." . . . . . "And take heed of running into inordinate affections; for when people come to own you, there is danger of the wrong part getting up. There was a strife among the disciples of Christ who should be the greatest? Christ told them, 'The heathen exercise lordship, and have dominion over one another, but it shall not be so among you." . . . . . "This is the word of the Lord God to you all — keep down, keep low, that nothing may rule nor reign in you, but the life itself." . . . . . "And all Friends

be careful not to meddle with the powers of the earth; but keep out of all such things; as ye keep in the Lamb's authority, ye will answer that of God in them, and bring them to do justice, which is the end of the law."

After the meeting was over, and most of the Friends were gone, there came a troop of horse, with a constable, to arrest George Fox. They sought for him in the house of John Crook; but he was then walking in the garden, and they went away without accomplishing their design.

There is reason to believe it was at this meeting, and through the ministry of George Fox, that Isaac Pennington was convinced of the principles of Friends. He was the son of Isaac Pennington, a wealthy alderman of London, and a noted member of the Long Parliament, who, perceiving the fine talents of his son, gave him all the advantages of education that schools and colleges could supply. From his childhood he was religiously inclined; he read diligently the sacred scriptures, watched over his own heart, and prayed fervently to the Lord, who was graciously pleased to hear his petitions, and to grant him a sense of spiritual good. But he longed for that more full and certain knowledge of God, which the scriptures testify was witnessed by men of former ages. He saw that the christian church had fallen far short of her primitive glory, and he mourned for the desolations of Zion. While in this frame of mind, he saw and perused some of the writings of those called Quakers; but he then slighted and contemned them, as, in his opinion, falling very far short of that wisdom and power for which he was seeking. He afterwards met with some of the Friends, who were led to speak to his condition, and he felt a love for them; yet he did not come into that simplicity of heart in which alone the gospel can be received. Being strong in intellect, and affluent in language, he despised the apparent weakness of those humble instruments, who had little of the world's erudition, but were deeply instructed in the school of Christ.

At length, he was induced to attend a Friends' meeting, on

entering which he felt the power of the Most High among them. Under the heart-searching ministry of George Fox, his soul was penetrated by the Word of divine life, and he was ready to exclaim, "This is he whom I have waited for and sought after from my childhood; who was always near me, and had often begotten life in my heart, but I knew him not distinctly, nor how to receive him or dwell with him." Thenceforth he became a devoted follower of the Lamb, and having joined in membership with Friends, he became conspicuous as an author of religious works, and an able minister of the gospel. His wife, Mary Pennington, was also convinced of Friends' principles. By her first husband, Sir William Springett, she was the mother of Gulielma Maria Springett, who became the wife of William Penn.

From Bedfordshire, George Fox went to the city of London, and while there he heard that a Jesuit, who came over in the suite of the Spanish ambassador, had challenged the Quakers to a dispute with him at the Earl of Newport's house. At first he offered to meet "twelve of their wisest and most learned men;" soon after, he said he would meet but six, and when they agreed to this, he reduced it to three only. The Friends, fearing he would decline altogether, hastened to the place appointed, where George Fox told Nicholas Bond and Edward Burrough to go up first and engage the Jesuit in conversation, and that he would walk awhile in the yard, and then come up after them. He advised that they should state this question to him: "Whether or not the church of Rome, as it now stood, was not degenerated from the true church which was in the primitive times, from the life and doctrines, and from the power and spirit that they were in?" They stated the question accordingly, and the Jesuit affirmed, "that the church of Rome now was in the virginity and purity of the primitive church." George Fox coming up at this juncture, asked him "whether they had the Holy Ghost poured out upon them as the apostles had?"

JESUIT. "No."

GEORGE FOX. "Then if ye have not the same Holy Ghost poured forth upon you, and the same power and spirit that the apostles had, ye are degenerated from the power and spirit which the primitive church was in."

There being little more to be said upon this point, George Fox queried, "What scripture have you for setting up cloisters for nuns, abbeys and monasteries for men; for all your several orders; for your praying by beads and to images; for making crosses; for forbidding of meats and marriages, and for putting people to death for religion? If you are in the practice of the primitive church, in its purity and virginity, then let us see by scriptures where ever they practised any such things." (For it had been agreed on both sides that they should prove by scripture what was advanced.)

JESUIT. "There is a written word and an unwritten word."

GEORGE FOX. "What dost thou call thy unwritten word?"

JESUIT. "The written word is the scripture, and the unwritten word is that which the apostles spoke by word of mouth; which are all those traditions that we practise."

GEORGE FOX. "I desire thee to prove that by the scriptures."

JESUIT. "The apostle Paul says, (2 Thess. ii. 5), 'When I was with you, I told you these things.' That is, I told you of nunneries and monasteries, and of putting to death for religion, and of praying by beads and to images, and to all the rest of the practices of the church of Rome. This is the unwritten word of the apostles, which they told them, and has since been continued down by tradition unto these times."

GEORGE FOX. "I desire thee to read that scripture again, that thou mayst see how thou hast perverted the apostle's words; for that which the apostle there tells the Thessalonians, 'he had told them before,' is not an unwritten word, but is there written down, namely, 'That the man of sin, the son of perdition, shall be revealed before the great and terri-

ble day of Christ, which he was writing of, should come; so this was not telling them any of those things that the church of Rome practises. In like manner the apostle, in the third chapter of that epistle, tells the church of some disorderly persons he heard were amongst them, busy bodies, who did not work at all: concerning whom he had commanded them by his unwritten word, when he was among them, that if any would not work, neither should they eat; which now he commanded them again in his written word in this epistle.' (2 Thess. iii.) So this scripture affords no proof for your invented traditions." As the priest had no other scripture to offer, George Fox added, "This is another instance of the degeneration of your church into such inventions and traditions as the apostles and primitive saints never practised." After this, the Jesuit advocated his sacrament of the altar, beginning with the paschal lamb, and the show-bread, and came to the words of Christ, "This is my body," and to what the apostle wrote to the Corinthians, concluding, "That after the priest had consecrated the bread and wine, it was immortal and divine, and he that received it received the whole Christ."

George Fox, after following him through the scripture texts he had quoted, thus continued: "The same apostle told the Corinthians, after they had taken bread and wine, in remembrance of Christ's death, that they were reprobates, "if Christ was not in them;" but if the bread they ate was Christ, he must of necessity be in them, after they had eaten it. Besides, if this bread and this wine, which the Corinthians ate and drank, was Christ's body, then how hath Christ a body in heaven?" And moreover, "Both the disciples at the supper, and the Corinthians afterwards, were to eat the bread and drink the wine" in remembrance of Christ, and to 'show forth his death till he came;' which plainly proves the bread and wine which they took, was not his body. For if it had been his real body that they ate, then he had been come, and was there then present, and it had been improper to have done such a thing, in remembrance of him, if he had been

there present with them, as he must have been, if that bread and wine which they ate and drank, had been his real body.' As to those words of Christ, 'This is my body,' Christ calls himself a vine, and a door, and is called in scripture a rock. Is Christ therefore an outward rock, door, or vine?"

JESUIT. "Oh! those words are to be interpreted."

GEORGE FOX. "So are those words of Christ, 'This is my body.' Now seeing thou hast said, 'the bread and wine are immortal and divine, and the very Christ; and that whosoever receives them, receives the whole Christ; let a meeting be agreed on between some whom the pope and his cardinals shall appoint, and some of us; let a bottle of wine and a loaf of bread be brought, and divided each into two parts, and let them consecrate which of those parts they will. Then set the consecrated and the unconsecrated bread and wine in a safe place, with a sure watch upon it; and let trial be thus made, whether the consecrated bread and wine would not lose their goodness, and the bread grow dry and mouldy, and the wine turn dead and sour, as well and as soon as that which was unconsecrated. By this means, the truth of this matter may be made manifest. And if the consecrated bread and wine change not, but retain their savour and goodness, this may be a means to draw many to your church: if they change, decay, and lose their goodness, then ought you to confess and forsake your error, and shed no more blood about it; for much blood hath been shed about these things; as in Queen Mary's days."

JESUIT. "Take a piece of new cloth, and cut it into two pieces, and make two garments of it, and put one of them upon King David's back, and the other upon a beggar's, and the one garment shall wear away as well as the other."

GEORGE FOX. "Is this thy answer?"

JESUIT. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Then by this the company may all be satisfied, that your consecrated bread and wine is not Christ. Have ye told people so long, that the consecrated bread and

wine were immortal and divine, and that they are the very real body and blood of Christ, and dost thou now say, it will wear away or decay, as well as the other? I must tell thee, Christ remains the same to-day as yesterday, and never decays, but is the saints' heavenly food, in all generations, through which they have life."

The Jesuit made no reply to this, being willing to drop the subject; for all the company saw his error, and that he could not defend his position. George Fox then queried of him, "Why does your church persecute and put people to death for religion?"

JESUIT. "It is not the church that does it, but the magistrates."

GEORGE FOX. "Are not those magistrates counted, and called believers and christians?"

JESUIT. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Then are they not members of your church?"

JESUIT. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "I leave the people to judge, from his own confession, whether the church of Rome doth not persecute and put people to death for religion?"

Thus the controversy ended, and the subtilty of the priest was confuted.

CHAPTER XIV.

Interview with Cromwell, and letter to him—Letter to Lady Claypole—To the Protector, on persecution — Sufferings of Friends — Letter to Parliament—Last interview with Cromwell—Death of the Protector—His character—Independents' declaration, and George Fox's answer — Illness of George Fox at Reading — His epistle to Friends against war—Richard Cromwell—Changes of government—General Monk—Commotion in London — George Fox visits the west of England — Meeting in the orchard at Bristol.

1658–9.

During the sojourn of George Fox in London, he was assiduously engaged in preaching the gospel, defending his principles by controversy, and attending to the sufferings of his friends, who were still subjected to heavy fines, and long imprisonments, on account of their religious testimonies. In an interview with Cromwell, he laid these sufferings before him, and doubtless reminded him of his own professions in favour of religious liberty. He also warned the Protector against accepting the regal title which the Parliament wished to confer upon him, and he concluded by telling him that if he did not avoid these things, "He would bring shame and ruin upon himself and his posterity." This remonstrance was well received, and soon after the interview the following letter was written:

"O Protector! who hast tasted of the power of God, which many generations before thee have not so much, since the days of apostacy from the apostles, take heed that thou lose not thy power; but keep kingship off thy head, which the world would give to thee; and earthly crowns under thy feet, lest with that thou cover thyself, and so lose the power of God. When the children of Israel went from that of God in them, they would have kings, as other nations had, as trans-

gressors had; and so God gave them one; and what did they do then? And when they would have taken Christ, and made him a king, he hid himself from them; he was hid from that which would have made him a king, he who was the king of the Jews inward. Oh! Oliver, take heed of undoing thyself, by running into things that will fade, the things of this world, that will change. Be subject and obedient to the Lord God.

GEORGE FOX."*

About this time, Lady Claypole, the favourite daughter of the Protector, being sick and much troubled in mind, could obtain no comfort from any that attended her; whereupon George Fox wrote to her as follows:

"FRIEND:—Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit from thy own thoughts, and then thou wilt feel the principle of God to turn thy mind to the Lord, from whom life comes; whereby thou mayst receive his strength and power to allay all storms and tempests." . . . . "Keep in the fear of the Lord God; that is the word of the Lord unto thee. For all these things happen to thee for thy good, and for the good of those concerned for thee, to make you know yourselves and your own weakness, that ye may know the Lord's strength and power, and may trust in him." . . . . "The same light which lets you see sin and transgression, will let you see the covenant of God, which blots out your sin and transgression, which gives victory and dominion over it, and brings into covenant with God." . . . . "So in the name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. God Almighty strengthen thee.

GEORGE FOX."

When this letter was read to her, she said it stayed her mind for the present.

At this time, a public subscription for the relief of the suffering Protestants of Poland and Bohemia being recommended by the Protector, and a proclamation having been

* Sewel, I. 182.

recently issued for a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the Waldenses, who were persecuted by the Duke of Savoy, George Fox was induced to write a letter to the Protector and principal officers of government, to show the nature of the true fast which God requires, and to make them sensible of their injustice and self-condemnation, in blaming the Papists for persecuting the Protestants, while they were themselves guilty of the same.

It is not surprising that he had no confidence in the sanctimonious professions of the men then in power, for their conduct afforded no evidence of a christian spirit. "Divers times," he says, "both in the time of the Long Parliament and of the Protector, (so called,) and of the committee of safety, when they proclaimed fasts, I was moved to write to them, and tell them their fasts were like unto Jezebel's: for commonly, when they proclaimed fasts, there was some mischief contrived against us. I knew their fasts were for strife and debate, to smite with the fist of wickedness; as the New England professors soon after did; who, before they put our friends to death, proclaimed a fast also." The following passage from a letter, written in London, by Richard Hubberthorn to George Fox, throws some light upon the course pursued by Cromwell. "This week did the mayor and aldermen and common councilmen of this city go up to Whitehall, to Oliver, and he made a speech among them, concerning the danger of enemies, and of Charles being ready in Flanders to come over with an army into England; and in his declaration he spoke more against Friends than ever before he formerly expressed, saying that there was a good law made against the Quakers, and that they did well to put it in execution, and he would stand by them; for, he said, they were against both magistracy and ministry. So he and they are all hardened against the truth; and all their pretences of setting Friends at liberty, which they were once about, are now ceased; and they are only plotting how to exalt themselves in the earth." *

* Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, No. XX. (16th of 1st mo. 1657.)

It was now a time of great suffering among the Friends, there being seldom fewer than a thousand of them in prison, besides the frequent abuse of their persons, and the spoiling of their goods. Many were led by a sense of duty, to go to the Parliament and offer themselves "to lie in the same prisons where their friends lay, in order that the prisoners might come forth," and not perish in the foul and loathsome jails. "This we did," says George Fox, "in love to God and our brethern, that they might not die in prison; and in love to those that cast them in, that they might not bring innocent blood upon their own heads, which we knew would cry to the Lord, and bring his wrath, vengeance and plagues upon them." Little attention was paid to these noble and disinterested offers, which were too often answered only with threats or blows.

The Parliament, being mostly composed of those who made great professions of sanctity, George Fox, in order to reprove their hypocrisy sent them the following lines:

"O FRIENDS:—do not cloak and cover yourselves: there is a God that knoweth your hearts, and that will uncover you. He seeth your way. "Wo be to him that covereth, but not with my Spirit, saith the Lord." Do ye act contrary to the law, and then put it from you? Mercy and true judgment ye neglect. Look, what was spoken against such. My Saviour spoke against such; 'I was sick, and ye visited me not: I was hungry, and ye fed me not: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: I was in prison, and ye visited me not.' But they said, 'When saw we thee in prison, and did not come to thee?' 'Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these little ones, ye did it not unto me.' Friends, ye imprison them that are in the life and power of truth, and yet profess to be the ministers of Christ; but if Christ had sent you, ye would bring out of prison, out of bondage, and receive strangers. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of

slaughter; ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you.

GEORGE FOX."

Having been some time in London, he now felt at liberty to leave the city; but, as he was going out in company with two of his friends, they were arrested by two troopers of Colonel Hacker's regiment, and were taken to the Mews, where, after being detained a short time without examination, they were liberated. The same day he went to Hampton Court to speak to the Protector, concerning the sufferings of Friends. This interview, which proved to be his last with Cromwell, is thus related in his Journal:

"I met him riding into Hampton Court Park; and before I came to him, as he rode at the head of his life-guard, I saw and felt a waft (or apparition) of death go forth against him; and when I came to him, he looked like a dead man. After I had laid the sufferings of Friends before him, and had warned him, as I was moved to speak to him, he bid me come to his house. So I returned to Kingston, and the next day went to Hampton Court, to have spoken further with him. But when I came, he was sick, and ——— Harvy, who waited on him, told me, the doctors were not willing I should speak with him. So I passed away, and never saw him more."

The extraordinary career of Cromwell was now drawing to its close. The mighty potentate whose sway was absolute at home, and whose arms inspired terror abroad, had for some time past been subject to a wasting disease, aggravated, it is said, by the dread of assassination, and the reproaches of a wounded conscience. The death of his favourite daughter, Lady Claypole, had preyed upon his spirits; and the more especially as she, in her last illness, "had lamented his sanguinary measures, and urged him to compunction."* Being apprehensive that his disease would prove fatal, he asked Doctor Godwin, one of his preachers, "Whether a man could

* Hume, IV. 128–9.

fall from grace?" which the doctor answering in the negative, the Protector replied, "Then I am safe, for I am sure that I was once in a state of grace." * It is said, however, by the advocates of Cromwell, that in the solemn hour of approaching dissolution, "he declared that all he had done had been for the welfare of the nation, to save it from anarchy, and from another war." And moreover, it is asserted that he then "showed much inward consolation and peace, annihilating and judging himself before God." †

He died on the third of September (then the 7th month), 1658, being the anniversary of his famous battles of Dunbar and Worcester, a day he always celebrated by rejoicings in honour of those signal victories.

Among all the great men and master spirits, whose minds were developed during the troubled and eventful period of the civil war in England, none were more remarkable for their qualities and their success, nor do any afford a more striking contrast in their characters, than George Fox and Oliver Cromwell. Both were endowed with great talents, and subjected to deep spiritual conflicts; but how different were the results in their principles and conduct! Cromwell took up arms to resist his sovereign, signed the warrant for his execution, became the chief actor in some of the bloodiest battles on record, and, in his Irish campaign, "showed towards his enemies greater severity than had ever, perhaps, been exercised by the pagan leaders of antiquity." ‡ Yet, being under the influence of a delusive fanaticism, he could thank God for victories stained with crime, saying, "God made them as stubble to our swords." "This is no other than the work of God, and he must be a very atheist that does not acknowledge it."

George Fox, being called to a spiritual warfare, and becoming a subject of Christ's peaceable kingdom, did not "meddle with the powers of the earth," nor could he take up the sword, even in self-defence. Like his Divine Master, he was willing

* Neal, II. 181. † D'Aubigné's Cromwell, 263. ‡ Ibid, 109.

to suffer for the truth, giving his cheek to the smiter, and not returning insult with injury, but "overcoming evil with good."

Cromwell, having attained to absolute power, professed to be the guardian of the church, and the champion of religious freedom; yet he suffered his name and his power to be used for the persecution of the Friends, thus destroying the liberty he professed to guard. George Fox was the staunch and consistent advocate of religious liberty, which he advanced by suffering, and by preaching the truths of the gospel.

The power of Cromwell died with him, being founded on usurpation, and supported by the sword: that of George Fox still survives, and continues to spread in ever-widening circles; being founded on religious principles, that are in their nature imperishable.

A short time before the death of the Protector, the ministers of the Independents, or Congregational churches, in London, met together, and proposed that there should be a conference of ministers and messengers from their churches in city and country, in order to prepare a declaration of their faith. To this proposition Cromwell reluctantly consented, but their assembly, which was convoked at the Savoy, in London, did not take place till more than a month after his decease. They adopted, with some slight alterations, the doctrinal articles of the Westminster Assembly, and, in relation to church government, substituted new articles of their own, declaring the independency of each congregation, in the appointment of its officers, and the administration of its discipline.*

George Fox having obtained a copy of this declaration of faith, before its publication, wrote strictures on it, "and when their book of church faith was sold up and down the streets, his answer to it was sold also." This gave umbrage to some of the members of Parliament, one of whom told him, "They must have him to Smithfield," but he replied that "he was above their fires, and feared them not." He desired

* Neal, II. 178–9.

them to consider, "Had all people been without a faith these 1600 years, that now the priests must make them one? Did not the apostle say, that Jesus was the author and finisher of their faith? And since Christ Jesus was the author of the apostle's faith, of the Church's faith in the primitive times, and of the martyrs' faith, should not all people look unto him to be the author and finisher of their faith, and not to the priests?" Major Wiggan being present, asserted that "Christ had taken away the guilt of sin, but had left the power of sin remaining in us." George Fox answered, "That was strange doctrine; for Christ came to destroy the devil's works, and the power of sin, and so to cleanse man from sin."

At a meeting about seven miles from London, the populace usually came from several adjacent parishes to abuse Friends, whom they often beat and bruised exceedingly. On one occasion, about eighty persons were maltreated by them, some having their coats and cloaks torn off, others being thrown into ditches and ponds, or smeared with dirt. George Fox, being informed of these proceedings, was moved to attend the next meeting at that place. When he came, he directed Friends to bring a table, and set it in the close where they met. The rabble came as usual, and he stood upon the table with a bible in his hand, showing them the fruits of their priests' teaching, and expostulating with them for their unchristian conduct, until they became ashamed, and were quiet. He then opened the scriptures to them, showing that the principles of Friends agreed therewith, and the meeting ended in peace.

Soon after this he went to Reading, where, being under great sufferings and exercises, "his countenance was altered, and his body became poor and thin." He was impressed with a sense and belief that great confusion was coming upon the people, and that the powers of government would be shaken. He saw that a great deal of hypocrisy, deceit, and strife prevailed among the people, "so that they were ready to sheathe their swords in one another's bowels." "There had been tenderness among them formerly, when they were

low, but when they got up, had killed, and taken possession, they came to be as bad as others." . . . "They had hardened themselves by persecuting the innocent, and were at this time crucifying the seed, Christ, both in themselves and others. "I had," says George Fox, "a sight and sense of the king's return a good while before, and so had some others. I wrote to Oliver several times, and let him know, that while he was persecuting God's people, they whom he accounted his enemies were preparing to come upon him. When some forward spirits that came amongst us, would have bought Somerset-house, that we might have meetings in it, I forbade them to do so: for I then foresaw the king's coming in again." . . . . . "I saw that a great stroke must come upon those in power: for they that had then got possession were so exceedingly high, and such great persecution was acted by them who called themselves saints, that they would take from Friends their copy-hold lands, because they could not swear in their courts. Sometimes, when we laid these sufferings before Oliver Cromwell, he would not believe it. Wherefore Thomas Aldam and Anthony Pearson were moved to go through all the jails in England, and to get copies of Friends' commitments under the jailor's hands, that they might lay the weight of their sufferings upon Oliver Cromwell. And when he refused to give order for the releasing of them, Thomas Aldam was moved to take his cap off his head, and rend it in pieces before him, and say unto him, "So shall thy government be rent from thee and thy house."

After remaining some weeks at Reading, George Fox, having regained his strength, returned to London. The body of Oliver Cromwell was then lying in state, previous to his interment; which did not take place till more than eleven weeks after his decease.* The great hall of Somerset-house, where he lay, was lighted with four or five hundred candles; his effigy was exhibited, and near it were men stationed, sounding with trumpets. George Fox, being grieved and dis-

* Neal, II. 181, and Note.

gusted with this pompous ceremony, so much at variance with all the professions of the Puritans, wrote a letter of expostulation to those who were concerned in it.

He also wrote an epistle to Friends, exhorting them to keep clear of all "the plotting and contriving" by which the several political factions sought to promote their own aggrandizement. "You are called to peace," he says, "therefore follow it; that peace is in Christ, not in Adam in the fall. All that pretend to fight for Christ are deceived, for his kingdom is not of this world, therefore his servants do not fight. Fighters are not of Christ's kingdom, but are without Christ's kingdom; for his kingdom stands in peace and righteousness, but fighters are in the lust: and all that would destroy men's lives are not of Christ's mind, who came to save men's lives." . . . . . "All that pretend to fight for the gospel are deceived; for the gospel is the power of God which was before the devil, or the fall of man was: and the gospel of peace was before fighting was. Therefore they that pretend fighting, and talk of fighting so, are ignorant of the gospel. All that talk of fighting for Sion, are in darkness; Sion needs no such helpers." *

At this time, the British government was subjected to many sudden and surprising mutations. On the death of the Protector, his son Richard was proclaimed his successor; but being a man of easy temper and humane feelings, he would not adopt the severe measures deemed necessary to maintain his authority. The powerful army which had sustained his father, was governed by officers who were republicans in principle, or jealous of the young Protector. At their instance, he dissolved the Parliament which had just been elected; and having, by this fatal step, lost the only stay that could support his authority, he resigned the Protectorship, and retired to the shades of private life.

The officers of the army summoned the remains of the old Parliament which had been dissolved by Oliver; and this body,

* Journal, I. 382.

on assuming the government, immediately declared for a Commonwealth without a chief magistrate, or house of peers. The Parliament next attempted to control the military officers who had restored them to power; but these not submitting, secured the avenues to the Parliament House, prevented the members from assembling, and appointed a committee, chiefly from among themselves, to exercise supreme authority. This was the committee of safety, of which Sir Henry Vane was chairman. They retained their supremacy but a short time; for being informed that General Monk, who had been Cromwell's chief commander in Scotland, was marching into England with his army, they resigned their authority, and restored the Parliament, which met again the 26th of December (10th month O. S.), 1659. This Parliament was called the Rump, probably because a part of its members had been secluded by Cromwell, in 1648. The Presbyterian party being predominant in London, insisted on the restoration of these members to their seats; and when General Monk arrived in the metropolis, he united with them, and carried that measure. The House, thus augmented, being under the control of the Presbyterians, immediately passed an act to revive the solemn league and covenant, and to establish their creed and directory as the state religion. In compliance with the demand of General Monk, and the prevalent wish of the nation, the Parliament then decreed its own dissolution, and the election of a new Parliament, to meet in the spring of 1660.

While these rapid and violent changes were taking place, the nation was in a state of great agitation. Each of the contending parties endeavoured to gain partisans, and some persons, who attended Friends' meetings, were only prevented from taking up arms by the influence of George Fox. While the committee of safety was in power, great places and commands were tendered to some of the Friends if they would take up arms for the commonwealth; but they declined all such offers, and publicly maintained their peaceable principles, declaring that "their weapons were not carnal, but spiritual."

During this season of commotion, George Fox addressed a letter to Friends, warning them to "keep out of the powers of the earth, which run into wars and fightings,"—to take heed of meddling with other men's matters, and to dwell in the power of the Lord, and in unity and love one to another."

After some stay in London, he travelled through several counties, and coming to Norwich in the early part of winter, 1659, he held a meeting, which was largely attended. Among the audience were several clergymen, one of whom, named Townsend, stood up and cried, "Error, blasphemy, and an ungodly meeting!"

GEORGE FOX. "I desire thee not to burden thyself with that which thou canst not make good. What is our error and blasphemy? As for an ungodly meeting, I do believe there are many people here who fear God, and therefore it is both unchristian and uncivil to charge civil, godly people with an ungodly meeting."

TOWNSEND. "The error and blasphemy is in your saying that people must wait on God by his power and spirit, and feel his presence when they do not speak words."

GEORGE FOX. "Did not the apostles and holy men of God hear God speak to them in their silence, before they spake forth the scripture, and before it was written."

TOWNSEND. "Yes. David and the prophets did hear God before they penned the scriptures, and felt his presence in silence before they spake them forth."

GEORGE FOX. "All people take notice, he said this was error and blasphemy in me to say those words, and now he hath confessed it is no more than the holy men of God in former times witnessed."

This controversy being ended, the meeting became quiet, and was crowned with the evidence of divine favour, insomuch that even the rude people who came to oppose, desired another meeting.

He returned to London about the time that General Monk arrived there, when the city was dismantled of its gates.

"Long before this," he says, "I had a vision, wherein I saw the city lie in heaps, and the gates down; and it was then represented to me, just as I saw it several years after, lying in heaps when it was burned." He had frequently warned the people and their rulers of "the day of recompense that was coming upon them," but they rejecting his admonitions, he now was moved to write them a letter to remind them of the prophecies spoken by the Lord's servants, which were evidently being fulfilled.

From London he set out on a journey to the western counties of England, during which he encountered some opposition, but had many precious meetings. While he was in Cornwall, there were many shipwrecks about the Land's-End, and he was shocked at the conduct of the people, in plundering the wrecks. "It was," he says, "the custom of that country: at such a time both rich and poor went out to get as much of the wreck as they could, not caring to save the people's lives; and in some parts of the country, they called shipwrecks God's grace. It grieved my spirit to hear of such unchristian actions, considering how far they were below the heathen at Melita, who received Paul, made him a fire, and were courteous towards him, and those that suffered shipwreck with him. Wherefore I was moved to write a paper, and send it to all the parishes, priests, and magistrates, to reprove them for such greedy actions, and to warn and exhort them, that if they could assist to save people's lives, and preserve their ships and goods, they should use their diligence therein; and consider, if it had been their own condition, they would judge it hard, if they should be upon a wreck, and the people should strive to get what they could from them, and not regard their lives."

"This paper had good service among people: and Friends have endeavoured much to save the lives of men, in time of wrecks, and to preserve the ships and goods for them. And when some, who suffered shipwreck, have been almost dead and starved, Friends have taken them to their houses to suc-

cour and recover them, which is an act to be practised by all true christians."

During this journey, he came to the city of Bristol, and attended a meeting in the orchard, where Friends frequently met for Divine worship. On this occasion, he was remarkably preserved from the intended violence of a drunken soldier, who came near him with a drawn sword, having bound himself with an oath, "to cut down and kill the man that spoke." This preservation, he attributed to "the Lord's power which came over all, and chained him with the rest," so that they had a blessed meeting, and ascribed the praise to the Lord's everlasting power and presence.

He also attended a General Meeting at Edward Pyot's, near Bristol, "at which it was judged, there were some thousands of people. Of this meeting, he says in his Journal, "It was very quiet, and many glorious truths were opened to the people, and the Lord Jesus Christ was set up, who is the end of all figures and shadows of the law, and the first covenant." . . . . "Christ saith to his disciples, 'Be ye perfect even as your Heavenly Father is perfect:' and he, who himself was perfect, comes to make man and woman perfect again, and brings them again to the state which God made them in. So he is the maker up of the breach, and the peace betwixt God and man.

"That this might the better be understood, by the lowest capacities, I used a comparison of two old people, who had their house broken down by an enemy, so that they, with all their children, were liable to all storms and tempests. And there came some to them, that pretended to be workmen, and offered to build up their house again, if they would give them so much a year; but when they had got their money, they left their house as they found it. After this manner came a second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth, each with his several pretence, to build up the old house, and each got the people's money, and then cried, 'They could not rear up the house,

the breach could not be made up; for there is no perfection here." They tell them, the house can never be perfectly built up again in this life, though they have taken the people's money for doing it. For all the sect-masters in christendom (so called) have pretended to build up Adam's and Eve's fallen house, and when they have got people's money, tell them the work cannot be perfectly done here; so their house lies as it did. But I told the people, Christ was come to do it freely, who by one offering, hath perfected forever all them that are sanctified, and renews them up into the image of God which man and woman were in before they fell, and makes man's and woman's house as perfect again as God made them at the first; and this Christ, the Heavenly Man, doth freely. Therefore, all are to look unto him, and all that have received him are to walk in him, the Life, the Substance, the First, and the Last; the Rock of Ages, the Foundation of many generations."

CHAPTER XV.

Restoration and promises of Charles II.—Wickedness in London—Letter of R. Hubberthorn—George Fox attends general meetings at Balby and Skipton—He is arrested at Swarthmore and committed to Lancaster jail—M. Fell applies to the King—George Fox's letter to the King—Book called the "Battledoor"—George Fox's examination in London—Released by the King's order—Seven hundred Friends released from prison—Fifth-monarchy insurrection—Persecution of Friends—Four thousand in prison—Declaration presented to the King—He orders the liberation of Friends—Execution of the Regicides—George Fox and the Jesuits—Account of the martyrdom of Friends in Boston—Deputies of Massachusetts in London—Their interview with George Fox—Union of Church and State in Massachusetts the cause of persecution.

1660–1.

In the year 1660, Charles II. was recalled from exile, and placed on the throne of his ancestors; which was effected by general consent, and without the effusion of blood. The nation being wearied with successive revolutions, and anxious for repose, welcomed with joyful acclamations the returning monarch, and fondly hoped that the evils of anarchy were about to be succeeded by the blessings of order and of law.

Prior to his embarkation for England, the King had issued from Breda a declaration, addressed to the British people, in which he promised "liberty to tender consciences, and that no man should be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion, which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." * This promise had given to the Friends, who were suffering under persecution, reason to hope that their burdens would be lightened and their liberties secured. These pleasing anticipations were not realized, for how much soever the king may have been inclined by the lenity of his temper to discourage persecution, his good intentions were

* Sewel, I. 300.

frustrated by his fondness for pleasure, and aversion to business. The nation was not yet prepared to tolerate a people whose principles and practice were alike repugnant to the licentious populace and to the rigid professors of a ceremonial religion. To the former they were obnoxious by their stern opposition to all immorality,—to the latter by their uncompromising testimony against a mercenary priesthood.

The state of society in London at the time of the restoration is thus described by a contemporary writer: "The roaring, swearing, drinking, revelling, debauchery, and extravagance of that time I cannot forget, with the menacing and threats of the rabble against all sobriety, and against religious people and their meetings, which they expected should be now totally suppressed and brought to nothing." *

There is still extant a letter from Richard Hubberthorn to George Fox, dated 29th of 3d month, (May,) 1660, being the day of the king's arrival in the metropolis, from which the following passages are selected: † "The wickedness in this city is so great, that it is past expression, and everywhere in the nation it abounds as a flood; and Friends everywhere pass in the hazard of their lives and of great sufferings." . . . . "It is only the power of the Lord God that preserves us here in this city from the rage of the wicked, which is very high. At our meeting this day at Westminister, in the morning, the people were very rude, and had almost broken the meeting; but afterwards some soldiers came, and did quiet the rude people, and set a guard at the door; and so the meeting was kept quiet, and ended quiet. This day, King Charles and his two brethren, James and Henry, came into the city. Charles is of a pretty sober countenance, but the great pride and vanity of those that brought him in, is inexpressible; and he is in danger to be brought (or wrought) to those things which he in himself is not inclined

* Mem. of W. Crouch, chap. III.

† Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, 349.

unto. The great excess and abomination that hath been used this day, in this city, is inexpressible.

"I know not as yet when I shall come from this city; for the service is very great.

RICHARD HUBBERTHORN."*

George Fox, after visiting his relatives at Drayton, in the early part of this year, proceeded on his travels in the gospel ministry, and attended the General Meeting of Friends at Balby, in Yorkshire, which was held in a great orchard, at John Killam's, several thousands of persons being assembled. He had heard that a troop of horse from York, with the neighbouring militia, were to be sent to break up the meeting, but he went in, and stood upon a stool to preach. After he had spoken some time, two trumpeters came near him, sounding their trumpets, and the captain of the troop cried aloud, "Divide to the right and left, and make way." Then he rode up to George, and said to him, "Come down, for I am come to disperse the meeting."

GEORGE FOX. "It is known to all that we are a peaceable people; we are used to having such meetings, but if thou apprehends we are met in a hostile way, I desire thee to search among us, and if any be found in possession of sword or pistol, let such suffer."

CAPTAIN. "I must see you dispersed, for I have come all night on purpose to disperse you."

GEORGE FOX. "What honour will it be to thee to ride with swords and pistols amongst so many unarmed men and women? If thou wilt be still and quiet, the meeting will probably not continue above two or three hours; as we came peaceably together, so we shall part, for thou mayest perceive the meeting is so large that all the country around cannot entertain them, and they intend to depart for their homes to-night."

CAPTAIN. "I cannot stay to see the meeting ended, but must disperse it before I go."

* Letters of Early Friends, XXXIII.

George Fox. "If thou canst not stay, I desire thee to leave a dozen of thy soldiers, to see the order and peaceableness of our meeting."

Captain. "I will give you an hour's time."

Then leaving half-a-dozen of his soldiers, he withdrew with his troop. The soldiers who remained, being hospitably entertained by the Friends, told them "They might stay till night if they would;" and so far were these troopers from disturbing the meeting, that they were rather assistant to Friends, by preventing the militia from doing the mischief they intended.

"We stayed," writes George Fox, "about three hours after, and had a glorious, powerful meeting; for the presence of the living God was manifest amongst us, and the seed Christ was set over all. Friends were built upon him, the foundation, and settled under his glorious heavenly teaching. After meeting, Friends passed away in peace, greatly refreshed with the presence of the Lord, and filled with joy and gladness, that the Lord's power had given them such dominion." . . . "Yet this captain was a desperate man; for it was he that said to me in Scotland, 'He would obey his superior's commands; if it was to crucify Christ, he would do it, or execute the Great Turk's commands against the Christians, if he was under him.' So that it was the eminent power of the Lord that chained both him and his troopers, and those envious militia soldiers also, who went away, not having power to hurt any of us, nor to break up our meeting."

Soon after, he was present at another General Meeting, held at Skipton, where Friends from most parts of the nation were convened for the transaction of business relating to the church both in England and beyond the seas.*

He also attended a General Meeting of Friends at Arnside, for the counties of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; after which, accompanied by Francis Howgill and Thomas Curtis, he proceeded to Swarthmore-hall. While

* See Dissertation on Discipline—Charity, &c.

here, he was arrested under a warrant from Henry Porter, formerly a major in Cromwell's army, but now a justice under King Charles. Being taken to the constable's house, he was guarded there by fifteen or sixteen men, "some of whom," he says, "sat in the chimney, for fear he should go up it; such dark imaginations possessed them. One of them said, he did not think a thousand men could have taken him."

After suffering much abuse, he was brought before Major Porter, at Lancaster, who asked him why he came into the country in that troublesome time? He answered, "Our meetings are known throughout the nation to be peaceable, and we are a peaceable people." He was then committed to the "Darkhouse" in Lancaster castle, to be kept a close prisoner until he should be delivered by the King or Parliament, and he was refused a copy of the mittimus which he requested. Two of his friends being permitted to read it, informed him that he was charged with being "a person generally suspected to be a common disturber of the peace of the nation, an enemy to the king, and a chief upholder of the Quaker sect; and that he, with others, had endeavoured to raise insurrections, and embroil the whole country in blood." These false accusations he answered by a public declaration, in which the following passage occurs: "It is much that he should say I am an enemy to the king, for I have no reason so to be, he having done nothing against me. But I have been often imprisoned and persecuted these eleven or twelve years by those that have been both against the king and his father, even the party that Porter was made a major by and bore arms for; but not by them that were for the king. I was never an enemy to the king, nor to any man's person upon earth."

In order to lay before the king this harsh treatment and unjust imprisonment, Margaret Fell went to London. She was accompanied in this work of mercy by Ann Curtis, whose father, a distinguished royalist, was hanged near his own door for endeavouring to effect the king's restoration. They were kindly received at Court, and a writ of habeas corpus was

issued to bring him before the judges in London. After many delays, the writ was served upon the sheriff, who required George Fox to enter into a bond to pay the expense of his removal, which he refusing to do, was left in prison some time longer. While thus imprisoned, he gave forth the following paper:

"True religion is the true rule and right way of serving God. And religion is a pure stream of righteousness flowing from the image of God, and is the life and power of God planted in the heart and mind by the law of life, which bringeth the soul, mind, spirit, and body to be conformable to God, the Father of spirits, and to Christ; so that they come to have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and with all his holy angels and saints. This religion is pure from above, undefiled before God, leads to visit the fatherless, widows, and strangers, and keeps from the spots of the world. This religion is above all the defiled, spotted religions in the world, that keep not from defilements and spots, but leave their professors impure; . . . whose fatherless, widows, and strangers beg up and down the streets."

He also addressed a letter to the King:

"King Charles:—Thou camest not into this nation by sword, nor by victory of war, but by the power of the Lord. Now, if thou dost not live in it, thou wilt not prosper. If the Lord hath showed thee mercy, and forgiven thee, and thou dost not show mercy and forgive, God will not hear thy prayers, nor them that pray for thee. If thou dost not stop persecution and persecutors, and take away all laws that hold up persecution about religion; if thou persist in them, and uphold persecution, that will make thee as blind as those that have gone before thee; for persecution hath always blinded those that have gone into it. Such God, by his power, overthrows, doth his valiant acts upon, and bringeth salvation to his oppressed ones. If thou bear the sword in vain, and let drunkenness, oaths, plays, May-games, with such like abominations and vanities, be encouraged, or go unpunished, as setting up of May-poles, with the image of the crown atop of

them, &c., the nation will quickly turn like Sodom and Gomorrah, and be as bad as the old world, who grieved the Lord till he overthrew them; and so he will you, if these things be not suppressed. Hardly was there so much wickedness at liberty before as there is at this day, as though there was no terror nor sword of magistracy; which doth not grace a government, nor is a praise to them that do well. Our prayers are for them that are in authority, that under them we may live a godly life, in which we may have peace, and that we may not be brought into ungodliness by them. Hear and consider, and do good in thy time, whilst thou hast power; be merciful and forgive; that is the way to overcome and obtain the kingdom of Christ.

GEORGE FOX."

During his imprisonment at Lancaster castle, a book, entitled the "Battledoor," was published, which was written at his instance by John Stubbs and Benjamin Furley. In this work examples were introduced from about thirty languages, ancient and modern, "to show that every language had its peculiar denomination for the singular and plural number in speaking to persons, and in every place where the description began, the shape of a battledoor was delineated."

The learning displayed in this book, and the odd appearance of its pages, marked with black lines in the shape of a battledoor, attracted considerable attention. Copies of it were presented to the king and his counsel, to the bishops of Canterbury and London, and to the two Universities. It was intended to prove that the use of *thee* and *thou* to a single person was the ancient and proper mode of address among all people until language was corrupted in order to flatter human pride. The king acknowledged that "it was the proper language of all nations," and it was thought the publication had some influence in reconciling reflecting minds to the peculiar address of Friends.

At length, the sheriff of Lancaster, finding George Fox would not yield to his demands, and being unwilling to incur

the expense of guarding him to London, suffered him to go up with one or two of his friends, on his giving his word "to appear before the judges at such a day of the term, if the Lord would permit."

He accordingly went thither, visiting his friends by the way, and holding religious meetings, until the time appointed. On presenting himself before the judges and delivering his mittimus, the charge against him was read in open court. "The people," he says, "were moderate, and the judges cool and loving; and the Lord's mercy was to them. But when they came to that part of it which said 'that I and my friends were embroiling the nation in blood and raising a new war, and that I was an enemy to the king,' &c., they lifted up their hands. Then, stretching out my arms, I said, 'I am the man whom that charge is against, but I am as innocent as a child concerning the charge, and have never learned any war postures. And,' said I, 'do ye think that if I and my friends were such men as the charge declares, that I should have brought it up myself against myself? Or that I should be suffered to come up with one or two of my friends with me? Had I been such a man as this charge sets forth, I had need to have been guarded up with a troop or two of horse. But the sheriff and magistrates of Lancashire thought fit to let me and my friends come up with it ourselves, almost two hundred miles, without any guard at all; which you may be sure they would not have done if they had looked upon me to be such a man.' . . . Then stood up 'Squire Marsh, and told the judges 'it was the king's pleasure that I should be set at liberty, seeing no accuser came up against me.'"

"They asked me, 'Whether I would put it to the king and council?' I said 'Yes, with a good will.' Thereupon they sent the sheriff's return, which he made to the writ of Habeas Corpus, containing the matter charged against me in the mittimus, to the king, that he might see for what I was committed." . . . . . "Upon perusal of this, and consideration of the whole matter, the king, being satisfied of my innocency,

commanded his secretary to send an order to judge Mallet for my release." . . . . . "Thus, after I had been a prisoner somewhat more than twenty weeks, I was freely set at liberty by the king's command, the Lord's power having wonderfully wrought for the clearing of my innocency, and Porter, who committed me, not daring to appear to make good the charge he had falsely suggested against me. But after it was known I was discharged, a company of envious, wicked spirits were troubled, and terror took hold of justice Porter; for he was afraid I would take the advantage of the law against him for my wrong imprisonment, and thereby undo him, his wife, and children. And indeed I was pressed by some in authority to have made him and the rest examples, but I said, I should leave them to the Lord; if the Lord forgave them, I should not trouble myself with them."

Richard Hubberthorn, on behalf of his suffering brethren, waited on the king, with whom he had a long conversation on the principles of Friends. Charles said to him, "None of you shall suffer for your opinions or religion, so long as you live peaceably, and you have the word of a king for it."

At the restoration, there were about seven hundred Friends in prison. These the king directed to be released, and there was, at one time, a prospect of measures being taken by the government to allow them the free exercise of their worship; but at this juncture an insurrection of the Fifth-monarchy men occurred, which put an end to all prospect of relief. These deluded fanatics, in number about sixty, paraded the streets of London in military array, proclaiming the reign of King Jesus, who, they said, was their invisible leader. Believing themselves invulnerable, they refused to submit to the civil authorities, and did not hesitate to encounter the troops brought to subdue them.

The insurrection began on First-day night, when the drums beat, and the cry was heard through the city, "Arm! arm!" George Fox arose from his bed early in the morning, and repaired immediately to the palace of Whitehall; which he

probably did to inform the government that Friends were not concerned in the plot. From thence he went to Pall-Mall, where he was joined by a number of Friends. By this time, the city and suburbs were up in arms, and the populace and soldiers so exceedingly rude, that it was dangerous to walk the streets. The Fifth-monarchy men, being few in number, were mostly shot down by the troops; and the remainder, being taken prisoners, were tried, condemned, and executed. But great disorder and much alarm prevailed throughout the week, and many Friends were maltreated or taken prisoners.

On Seventh-day night, a company of troopers, whose leader had been a soldier in the Parliament army, rudely seized upon George Fox; but he was protected by "Squire Marsh, who, though an attendant of the king's bed-chamber, had come to Pall-Mall purposely to lodge with him." Next morning, a company of foot came and guarded him to Whitehall. As he went, he saw the Friends going to their meeting, and commended them for their fidelity in this time of danger. At White-hall, he preached to the crowds in attendance, and was then placed in confinement two or three hours; from which he was liberated through the influence and exertions of his friend Marsh.

Throughout the city and country, great havoc prevailed, so that it was dangerous to stir abroad for several weeks. Some thousands of Friends were cast into prison, and Margaret Fell carried an account of them before the king and council. At one time during this year, no less than 4230 Friends were confined in the jails and castles of the kingdom. Under a deep sense of "their grievous sufferings, and of their innocency towards God and man," George Fox and another Friend drew up a Declaration against plots and fighting, which was presented to the king the 21st of the 11th month, 1660.*

This declaration had a salutary effect, and those of the Fifth-monarchy men who were executed having openly declared that the Friends "had no hand in, or knowledge of

* See Dissertation on Testimonies — War.

their plot," the public became generally convinced of their innocence.

At length the king, being importuned by Margaret Fell and others, issued a declaration, "That Friends should be set at liberty without paying fees."

About this time, the trial and execution of the judges of the late king, and of others concerned in his death, excited deep interest throughout the nation; but so great had been the change in public sentiment, that little sympathy was evinced for the sufferers. Concerning these sanguinary proceedings, George Fox remarks, "This was sad work, destroying people contrary to the nature of Christians, who have the nature of lambs and sheep. But there was a secret hand in bringing this day upon that hypocritical generation of professors, who, being got into power, grew proud, haughty, and cruel beyond others, and persecuted the people of God without pity."

On the restoration of the royal family, many Jesuits had come over in the suite of James, Duke of York, who was an avowed papist. These priests began to fawn upon the Friends, saying, "They were the best and most self-denying people, and it was a great pity they did not return to the holy mother church." Friends were, generally, averse to having any intercourse with them; but George Fox proposed to discourse with some of them, and "two who looked like courtiers," agreed to meet him. The points discussed, and the result of their controversy, were nearly the same as already related of his previous interview with one of their order. It was said they afterwards gave a charge to the Papists, "Not to dispute with the Quakers, nor to read any of their books."

In the summer of 1661, intelligence was received in England, that William Leddra had recently been put to death in Boston. He was the last of the four Friends who, within a few years, had been executed there on account of their religious testimonies; the others were William Robinson, Marmaduke Stevenson, and Mary Dyer, all of whom had suffered

martyrdom with Christian meekness and unwavering confidence in their holy Redeemer. Information being also received that other Friends were imprisoned there for the same cause, Edward Burrough waited on the king, who forthwith issued a mandamus to arrest these cruel proceedings. A Friend named Samuel Shattuck, who, on account of his religion, had been banished from New-England, and forbidden to return, under pain of death, was, by the king's order, made the bearer of the mandamus, and the Friends of London immediately despatched a ship, commanded by one of their members, purposely to convey him thither. In six weeks he arrived at the port of Boston, and was the means of liberating his imprisoned brethren, one of whom had been placed in irons, to await his execution.

The governor and General Court of Massachusetts, being apprehensive of the king's displeasure, on account of their inhuman proceedings, despatched a messenger with a letter to inform him that they had complied with his mandamus, and liberated the Friends. Subsequently they sent a deputation to palliate or apologize for their conduct, and to promote the interests of the colony. The persons chosen for this embassy were John Norton, a clergyman of Boston, and Simon Broadstreet, both of whom had been concerned in those sanguinary measures.

George Fox and other Friends, had several interviews with these deputies, and charged them with being accessary to the murder of their Friends. Norton denied all participation in it: but this departure from veracity failed to screen him, for John Copeland, who had had an ear cut off by them, being in London, came forward and confronted him with a statement of the facts. Broadstreet, it appears, was less intimidated, or more truthful. On being asked by George Fox, "Whether he had a hand in putting to death those four servants of God, whom they hanged for being Quakers?" he confessed he had. George then inquired of him and his associates, whether they would acknowledge themselves to be

subject to the laws of England? And if they did, by what law they had put those Friends to death? They replied, "They were subject to the laws of England, and they had put the Friends to death by the same law, as the Jesuits were put to death in England."

GEORGE FOX. "Do you believe, those Friends whom you put to death were Jesuits, or jesuitically inclined?"

DEPUTIES. "No."

GEORGE FOX. "Then you have murdered them. If you put them to death, by the law that Jesuits are put to death here in England, and yet confess they were no Jesuits; it plainly appears, you have put them to death in your own wills, without any law."

BROADSTREET. "Do you come to catch us?"

GEORGE FOX. "You have caught yourselves, and may justly be questioned for your lives. If the father of William Robinson were in town, he would probably question you, and bring your lives in jeopardy."

The deputies, being alarmed, began to excuse themselves, saying, "There was no persecution now amongst them." The next morning, however, the Friends received letters from New England, informing them of renewed persecutions, whereupon they went to the deputies, and laid the facts before them, which covered them with shame and mortification. Some of the old royalists, having no good will for the Puritans, earnestly desired the Friends to prosecute the New England deputies; but George Fox and his friends said, "They left them to the Lord, to whom vengeance belonged, and he would repay it."*

The father of William Leddra, who was not a Friend, being unwilling to let the murder of his son pass without retribution, came to London to institute an inquiry, and to interrogate the deputies respecting it. Norton and Broadstreet, being alarmed at the prospect before them, made a timely

* George Fox's Journal, I. 435, and Sewel's Hist. I. 385.

retreat and returned to New England, where they met with a cool reception.*

The persecution of Friends in Massachusetts, about the middle of the 17th century, is a subject that must be familiar to most readers, and needs but little comment here, especially as at this time there is no community in christendom, by whom the principles of religious liberty are more highly prized or more fully sustained, than by the descendants of the pilgrims. It may, however, be useful to the present generation, that the causes which led to that awful tragedy should be examined and remembered.

The true principles of religious and civil liberty were not understood by the pilgrims. They were under the influence of ecclesiastical domination, and they laid the foundation of their political edifice on an unsound basis, when they determined on a union of church and state. Soon after the foundation of the colony, a law was promulgated that "no man should be admitted a freeman who was not a church-member." † "It was necessary for the minister to certify that the candidates for freedom were of orthodox principles as well as of good lives," ‡ and indeed it is conceded by one of their eulogists, "that church and state were very curiously and efficiently interwoven with each other." §

In the year 1676, "five-sixths of the colonists were in fact disfranchised by the influence of the ecclesiastical power." ‖ The Puritan clergy then in power, who were of the Independent sect, were so far from acknowledging the inherent right of all men to judge for themselves in matters of religion, that they did not admit toleration itself to be a christian duty. "They re-enacted the worst statute of the English code, that of enforcing attendance on the parish church." A fine was im-

* Bowden's History of Friends in America. p. 243.

† Tyson's Dis. on Colonial Hist. Mem. Hist. Soc. of Pa. IV. 19.

‡ Note in Hutchinson's Hist. Mass. I. 31, quoted by Tyson.

§ Address of President Quincy.

‖ Story's Dis. p. 55, quoted by Tyson.

posed for non-attendance, and a general tax was assessed to support their ministry.* Many of their sermons, and other religious publications, breathe a spirit of intolerance that has seldom been surpassed. Indeed, "they denounce the idea of religious liberty as the offspring of delusion, or the specious plea of infidelity." †

Within one year from the first settlement of Massachusetts Bay, two respectable colonists were sent back to England by Governor Endicott, because they would not renounce the liturgy of the Episcopal church; and subsequently the banishment of Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams manifested the same intolerant spirit. The first Friends who arrived on a religious mission, were Mary Fisher and Anne Austin, in the year 1656; who, before they landed, were arrested on board the vessel, and taken directly to Boston jail, where they remained until banished by the colonial authorities. ‡ Thus we see that their banishment could not have been the consequence of any disturbance they created, but was in strict accordance with a system of policy coeval with the government.

The Friends who afterwards came, were first banished, and then, on their return, severely whipped; and finally, four of them were hung. It has been said that they interrupted the public worship, and reviled the magistrates and ministers. This charge is probably without foundation; for although some of them felt it their duty in New England, as well as in the mother country, to speak in places of public worship, we do not find that they addressed the congregation until the minister had ended, and they were stopped, violently assailed, and dragged to prison. § It is altogether probable that they preached some unpalatable truths to the ministers and magistrates of Boston, reproving them for their persecuting laws, their spiritual pride, and dead formality. Such preaching was needed, and the ministry and sufferings of those devoted followers of the Lamb, were instrumental in planting the seeds

* Tyson's Discourse, and Bancroft's U. S.
† Tyson.
‡ Bowden's Hist. 244.
§ Tyson's Discourse.

of true spiritual religion in many hearts, which afterwards produced a rich harvest, to the glory of the great Husbandman.

In this brief review we have seen, in the early history of Massachusetts, the same disastrous results that have always attended the union of church and state. It led to the imposition of civil disabilities on all dissenting sects; it secured the predominance of the ecclesiastical power; and it produced the most unrelenting persecution of all who would not bow to the mandates of a self-righteous, bigoted clergy.

CHAPTER XVI.

Preaching of Friends in foreign lands—Funds raised—George Fox proposes a colony in America — Letter of Josiah Cole — George Fox's conversation with a Papist—Marriages of Friends—Their sufferings —Address to the king—George Fox the younger—Letter of T. Sherman to George Fox — Travels of George Fox in the country — Seized by Lord Beaumont, and sent to Leicester jail — His trial and liberation — Death of Edward Burrough and Richard Hubberthorn — Travels of George Fox.

1661–3.

The doctrines of Friends had now been widely disseminated, and embraced by many in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the British American provinces. But the messengers of the gospel of peace did not confine their labours to the British dominions. William Ames and William Caton had made proselytes in Holland and Germany; Samuel Fisher and John Stubbs had preached and distributed books in Rome; Catherine Evans and Sarah Cheevers had proceeded to Leghorn and Malta; Mary Fisher had been courteously heard by the Sultan of Turkey; and John Stubbs and Henry Fell had gone to Alexandria, in Egypt, intending to visit China, and to penetrate into Abyssinia, then known as the country of Prester John.

Although it was a settled principle among Friends, that nothing in the nature of a compensation for religious services should be received from man, yet some of those engaged in these extensive travels in the gospel ministry, not being able to defray their expenses without assistance, it became necessary for the Society to provide the means to supply their necessities. Accordingly a subscription had been opened among Friends, by direction of a General Meeting held at Skipton, in 1658, which resulted in the collection of £443, 5*s.* 5*d.** This sum indicates great liberality, especially when we take into view the value of money at that day, and the circumstances of Friends, many of whom were impoverished by losses and imprisonments on account of their religious testimonies.

At another General Meeting of Friends, held at Skipton, on the 25th of the 2d month, 1660, an epistle was issued, recommending a similar collection. It commences thus:

"Dear Friends and Brethren:—We, having certain information from some Friends of London, of the great work and service of the Lord beyond the seas, in several parts and regions, as Germany, America, and many other islands and places, as Florence, Mantua, Palatine, Tuscany, Italy, Rome, Turkey, Jerusalem, France, Geneva, Norway, Barbadoes, Bermuda, Antigua, Jamaica, Surinam, Newfoundland; through all which Friends have passed in the service of the Lord, and divers other countries, places, islands, and nations; and among many nations of the Indians, in which they have had service for the Lord, and through great travails have published his name, and declared the everlasting gospel of peace unto them that have been afar off, that they might be brought nigh unto God."

A collection is then recommended in every particular meeting, to be sent "as formerly, to London, for the service and use aforesaid."†

* Bowden's History of Friends in America, 59–60.

† Ibid.

Among those devoted ministers of the gospel who visited foreign lands, Josiah Cole was one who travelled extensively in America, and particularly among the Indians of the interior. By a letter of his, still extant, it appears that the far-reaching vision of George Fox had perceived the advantages that would be derived from planting a colony of Friends in North America, and that, at his instance, efforts had been made, but without success, to secure a location on the Susquehanna, more than twenty years before William Penn became the proprietor of Pennsylvania.*

In the year 1662, George Fox and Gilbert Latey obtained the release of Catharine Evans and Sarah Cheevers, ministers in the Society of Friends, who had been for some time imprisoned by the Inquisition at Malta. In order to effect this object, they waited repeatedly on Lord D'Aubigny, a Roman Catholic priest in orders, then staying in London. In one of their interviews, the conversation turning on religion, George Fox brought the priest to acknowledge, that "Christ hath enlightened every man that cometh into the world, with his spiritual light; that he tasted death for every man; and that the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, and would bring their salvation, if they did but obey it." Then George asked him what the Papists would do with all their relics and images, if they should own and believe in this light, and receive this grace to teach them, and bring their salvation? He answered, those things were but policies, to keep people in subjection.†

At this time, he relates in his Journal, that among the various troubles, to which Friends in Great Britain were subjected, one was concerning marriages, performed according to their order, which some persons were disposed to consider illegal. A case, however was tried at Nottingham assizes, in which their legality was established by a judicial decision. The

* See the letter dated Maryland, 11th month, 1660, Bowden's Hist. p. 389.

† Sewel, I. 360, and Journal, II. 8.

charge of Judge Archer on this occasion, was somewhat remarkable. After the counsel on both sides had pleaded, he summed up the case by saying, "There was a marriage in Paradise, when Adam took Eve, and Eve took Adam; and that it was the consent of parties that made a marriage."

The number of Friends in prison being now very great, and their sufferings severe, George Fox and Richard Hubberthorn drew up the following address, which they had delivered as directed:

TO THE KING.

FRIEND:—who art the chief ruler of these dominions, here is a list of some of the sufferings of the people of God, in scorn called Quakers, that have suffered under the changeable powers before thee, by whom there have been imprisoned, and under whom there have suffered for good conscience sake, and for bearing testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, "three thousand one hundred seventy-three persons; and there lie yet in prison in the name of the commonwealth, seventy-three persons," that we know of. And there have died in prison, in the time of the commonwealth, "and of Oliver and Richard the protector, through cruel and hard imprisonments, upon nasty straw and in dungeons, thirty-two persons." There have been also imprisoned in thy name, since thy arrival, by such as thought to ingratiate themselves thereby with thee, "three thousand sixty and eight persons." Besides this, our meetings are daily broken up by men with clubs and arms (though we meet peaceably, according to the practice of God's people in the primitive times); our friends are thrown into waters, and trod upon till the very blood gusheth out of them; the number of which abuses can hardly be uttered. Now this we would have of thee, to set them at liberty that lie in prison in the names of the commonwealth and of the two protectors, and them that lie in thy own name, for speaking the truth, and for a good conscience sake, who have not lifted up an hand against thee nor any man; and that the meetings

of our Friends, who meet peaceably together in the fear of God to worship him, may not be broken up by rude people, with their clubs, swords, and staves. One of the greatest things that we have suffered for formerly, was because we could not swear to the protectors, and all the changeable governments; and now we are imprisoned because we cannot take the oath of allegiance. Now, if Yea be Yea, and Nay Nay, to thee and to all men upon the earth, let us suffer as much for breaking of that as others do for breaking an oath. We have suffered these many years, both in lives and estates under these changeable governments, because we cannot swear, but obey Christ's doctrine, who commands, "we should not swear at all," Matth. v., James v.; and this we seal with our lives and estates, with our Yea and Nay, according to the doctrine of Christ. Hearken to these things, and so consider them in the wisdom of thy God, that by it such actions may be stopped; thou that hast the government, and mayst do it. We desire all that are in prison may be set at liberty, and that for the time to come they may not be imprisoned for conscience and for the truth's sake. If thou question the innocency of their sufferings, let them and their accusers be brought before thee, and we shall produce a more particular and full account of their sufferings, if required.

GEORGE FOX AND RICHARD HUBBERTHORN.

This address is remarkable for its plain, blunt statement of facts, and if it appears deficient in courtesy, let us remember that the king had failed to perform his promises, and was justly chargeable with neglect towards his suffering subjects. He was accustomed to receive from Friends more pointed admonitions than any that reached him from other sources. On one occasion, it is related that an address from George Fox the younger, alluded so plainly to the vices of the court, that the Duke of York advised the king to punish him severely; but Charles, being conscious that the rebuke was well merit-

ted, replied very sensibly, "It were better to amend our lives." *

It may not be inappropriate here to remark that the George Fox above mentioned, who died in 1661 or '62, assumed the appellation of "the younger," on account of his being less advanced in religious experience than his distinguished contemporary of the same name. He was, however, highly esteemed as a minister and writer. He was a man of undaunted courage and extraordinary resignation, which he evinced by his bold attacks upon wickedness in high places, and his patient endurance of abuse and imprisonment.†

In a preceding chapter of this work, a relation was given of the cruelty exercised by a jailor towards George Fox, while he was confined in the house of correction at Derby. It now appears by the following letter that he was made the instrument to reclaim from the error of his ways a man who then appeared to be hardened in vice:

THOMAS SHERMAN TO GEORGE FOX.

DEAR FRIEND:—Having such a convenient messenger, I could do no less than give thee an account of my present condition, remembering that, to the first awakening of me to a sense of life, and of the inward principle, God was pleased to make use of thee as an instrument. So that sometimes I am taken with admiration that it should come by such a means as it did; that is to say, that Providence should order thee to be my prisoner, to give me my first real sight of the truth. It makes me many times to think of the jailor's conversion by the apostles. Oh! happy George Fox, that first breathed that breath of life within the walls of my habitation! Notwithstanding my outward losses are, since that time, such that I am become nothing in the world, yet I hope I shall find that all these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They have taken all from me; and now, instead of

* Sewel, I. 351. † Ibid, 353.

keeping a prison, I am rather waiting when I shall become a prisoner myself. Pray for me, that my faith fail not, and that I may hold out to the death, that I may receive a crown of life. I earnestly desire to hear from thee, and of thy condition, which would very much rejoice me. Not having else at present but my kind love unto thee and all christian friends with thee, in haste, I rest thine in Christ Jesus,

THOMAS SHERMAN.

After some stay in London, George Fox, accompanied by Alexander Parker and John Stubbs, travelled through the country, visiting meetings, until they came to Bristol. Here he stayed a week, and attended meetings, which he describes as eminently favoured with the evidence of divine life and power. "The magistrates had threatened to take him, and had raised the trained bands," which induced his friends to dissuade him from going to meeting, but he evinced his usual intrepidity by attending and preaching the gospel; nor was he disturbed, for the officers and soldiers did not arrive till after the meeting was ended. It was remarkable that in many places where measures had been concerted for his arrest, circumstances unexpectedly occurred to prevent the execution of their designs, and he attributed his preservation from imminent peril to the overruling providence of God.

Continuing his travels through Wiltshire and Berkshire, he returned to London, "having great meetings amongst Friends as he went." He remained in the city but a short time; and then, accompanied by John Stubbs, he went into Leicestershire.

At Barnet-hills they met with Captain Brown, a Baptist, who, when the act was passed "for breaking up meetings," had retired to that secluded place to avoid persecution. His wife being a Friend, he was not willing she should attend meetings, for he said "she should not go to prison." But he was sorely distressed by a sense of his unfaithfulness, and when asked by George Fox how he did, "How do I do?" he replied, "the plagues and vengeance of God are upon me, a

runagate, a Cain as I am, God may look for a witness for me, and such as me; for if all were not faithfuller than I, God would have no witness left in the earth." In this condition he lived on bread and water, and thought it was too good for him. At length he got home again with his wife to his own house at Barrow, where afterwards he was convinced of God's eternal truth, and died in it. A little before his death, he said, 'Though he had not borne a testimony for truth in his life, he would bear a testimony in his death, and would be buried in his orchard,' and was so."

Leaving Barnet-hills, they proceeded to Swansea, where, at a Friend's house, lord Beaumont came with a company of soldiers, and made prisoners of several Friends that were present. George Fox was in the hall, conversing with a poor widow and her daughter; and when the soldiers brought him forward, being asked his name, he said, "My name is George Fox, and I am well known by that name." "Ay," said lord Beaumont, "you are known all the world over." On their searching him for letters, he said, "I am no letter-carrier: why dost thou come among a peaceable people with swords and pistols, without a constable, contrary to the king's proclamation, and the late act?" Constables being sent for, the prisoners were placed in their custody, and next day were brought before lord Beaumont, who made out a mittimus stating that "they were to have had a meeting." He then delivered them to the constables, to be taken to Leicester jail; but it being harvest time, no one was disposed to go with them. The people were loth to take their neighbours to prison, especially in such a busy time. The constables offered to give the Friends their own mittimus, and to let them go to jail unattended, as they had often done before, which was a striking proof of the confidence generally reposed in them. George Fox and his friends very properly refused this; and told them, although Friends had sometimes done so, they would not take this mittimus, but some one must go with them to the jailer. At last a poor labouring man was hired for the purpose, and

he reluctantly went with them. "So we rode to Leicester," says George Fox in his Journal, "being five in number: some carried their bibles open in their hands, declaring truth to the people as we rode, in the fields and through the towns, and telling them, 'we were prisoners of the Lord Jesus Christ going to suffer bonds for his name and truth's sake.' One woman Friend carried her wheel in her lap to spin in prison, and the people were mightily affected."

At Leicester they were taken to an inn, the keeper of which was in commission as a civil officer, and he, being unwilling that the Friends should go to prison, offered to keep them at his house. But they, foreseeing that the expense would be considerable, and learning that many of their friends were already in prison, preferred to go thither; especially as they were apprehensive that their kind host would incur much risk by having their meetings in his house. They stayed all that day in the prison-yard, and desired the jailor to let them have some straw. He answered, "You do not look like men that would lie on straw." This jailor was a very cruel man, and had thrust seven other Friends, then in prison, into the dungeon among the felons, where they had scarcely room to lie down. George Fox inquired of William Smith, a Friend who came to see them, "Whether the jailor or his wife was master?" He answered, "The wife: and though she sat mostly in her chair, not being able to go but on crutches, yet she would beat her husband when he came within her reach, if he did not as she would have him." William Smith was then desired to say to her that, "If she would let them have a room, and suffer the other Friends to come out of the dungeon and be with them, leaving it to them to pay her what they would, it might be better for her." He went accordingly, and after some persuasion, she consented to this arrangement.

The Friends were now informed that the jailor would not allow them to have any drink out of the town, but what beer they drank they must buy of him. George Fox told them

he could remedy that, if they would consent. The jailor, he said, could not deny them water, and he proposed that they should steep a little wormwood in it, which they did, and it served them instead of beer. "Before we came," says George Fox, in his Journal, "when those few Friends that were prisoners met together on First-days, if any of them was moved to pray to the Lord, the jailor would come up, with his quarter-staff in his hand, and his mastiff dog at his heels, and pluck them down by the hair of the head, and strike them with his staff; but when he struck Friends, the mastiff dog, instead of falling upon them, would take the staff out of his hand. When First-day came, I spoke to one of my fellow-prisoners to carry a stool, and set it in the yard, and give notice to the debtors and felons, that there would be a meeting in the yard, and they that would hear the word of the Lord declared, might come thither. So the prisoners gathered in the yard, and we went down, and had a very precious meeting, the jailor not meddling. Thus every First-day we had a meeting as long as we stayed in prison, and several came out of the town and country. Many were convinced, and some received the Lord's truth there, who stood faithful witnesses for it ever since."

When the sessions came, he and his companions, in number about twenty, were brought before the court, and being placed by the jailor where the thieves were, the oaths of allegiance and supremacy were tendered to them.

George Fox said, "I never took any oath in my life, and it is known that we cannot swear, because Christ and his apostles forbade it. If you can prove, that after Christ and the apostles forbade swearing, they ever commanded Christians to swear, we will take the oaths; otherwise, we are resolved to obey Christ's command, and the apostles' exhortation."

Justices. "You must take the oath, in order to manifest your allegiance to the king."

George Fox. "I was formerly sent prisoner from this town to London, by Colonel Hacker, under pretence that I

held meetings to plot to bring in king Charles. I desire you to read our mittimus, which sets forth the cause of our commitment to be, "that we were to have a meeting." Now, Lord Beaumont could not by that act send us to jail, unless we had been taken at a meeting, and found to be such persons as the act speaks of; therefore, we desire you to read the mittimus, and see how wrongfully we are imprisoned."

The court would not notice the mittimus, but called a jury and indicted the Friends "for refusing to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy." While they were standing in court, a cut-purse had his hand in several Friends' pockets, who detected him and pointed him out to the justices; but although the thief, when examined, could not deny the charge, he was set at liberty. Thus the course of justice was entirely frustrated, and crime suffered to go unpunished, while innocent men were made to suffer.

The jury having retired, soon returned with a verdict of guilty, and the justices, after whispering together, directed the jailor to take the Friends back to prison. A great crowd followed them, and the streets were full of people, to whom they preached as they passed along. When they were come to their chamber again, the jailor desired all who were not prisoners to withdraw, and then he said, "Gentlemen, it is the court's pleasure that you should be set at liberty, except those that are in for tithes: and you know that there are fees due to me; but I shall leave it to you to give me what you will."

Thus they were unexpectedly liberated, and George Fox, accompanied by Leonard Fell, went back to Swanington. The latter had a letter from Lord Hastings, who, hearing of his imprisonment, had written from London to the justices of the sessions to set him at liberty. This letter he had not delivered to the court, but now took it to Lord Beaumont, who, on reading it, appeared much troubled, but threatened, if George Fox and his friends should have any more meetings at Swanington, that he would break them up and send them to prison

again. They paid no attention to his threat, but held a meeting there, which was not disturbed, and then they went on their way through several counties, holding meetings till they came to London.

After a short stay in the city, he resumed his travels in the gospel ministry, and passed through Essex into Cambridgeshire, where he heard that his friend Edward Burrough, who had been committed to Newgate prison by Alderman Brown, was released by death, the 13th of 12th month, 1662. This eminent man was remarkable for the power and unction that attended his ministry, as well as for the intrepidity of his conduct, and his great patience in suffering for the cause of truth. During his last illness, he uttered many expressions indicating the peace of mind he enjoyed in the prospect of death. Once he was heard to say, "There is no iniquity lies at my door; but the presence of the Lord is with me, and his life I feel justifies me." Another day he was thus heard in prayer to God, "Thou hast loved me when I was in the womb; and I have loved thee from my cradle; and from my youth unto this day; and have served thee faithfully in my generation." And to his friends that were about him, he said, "Live in love and peace, and love one another." At another time he said, "The Lord taketh the righteous from the evil to come." And praying for his enemies and persecutors, he said, "Lord, forgive Richard Brown, if he may be forgiven." And being sensible that death was approaching, he said, "Though this body of clay must turn to dust, yet I have a testimony that I have served God in my generation; and that spirit which hath lived, and acted, and ruled in me, shall yet break forth in thousands." Thus he was enabled, through the spirit of his Redeemer, to triumph over the pains of death, which he regarded as the passage to a glorious immortality. He died at the age of about twenty-eight years, ten of which had been devoted to the work of the ministry.

Among the Friends who died prisoners in Newgate the same year, was Richard Hubberthorn, another distinguished

minister of the gospel, and a fellow-labourer with George Fox. Being crowded, with hundreds of Friends, into that noisome prison, he fell sick, and in less than two months was called to meet the Bridegroom of souls, which to him was a welcome summons, for his lamp was burning and his vessel filled with the oil of the heavenly kingdom.

During the greater part of the year 1663, George Fox was almost constantly travelling in the service of the gospel; having in that time traversed at least twenty-nine counties in England and Wales, some of which he visited more than once. It was a time of much persecution, great numbers of his friends were in prison, and many attempts were made to take him; but there seemed to be a special providence attending him. Although he exposed himself by attending large public meetings almost every day for many weeks in succession, yet those who were sent to take him, generally came too late or too early to the meetings, or were deterred in some way from executing their purpose. So eager were the magistrates in some places to promote persecution, that they offered five shillings and even a noble a day to any that could apprehend the speakers among the Quakers, and a justice in Westmoreland had offered five pounds for the apprehension of George Fox.

In his Journal he gives the following graphic account of their proceedings in Devonshire: "Friends told us how they had broken up their meetings by warrants from the justices, and how by their warrants they were required to carry Friends before the justices. The Friends bid them carry them then. The officers told them they must go, but they said 'Nay, that was not according to their warrants, which required them to carry them.' Then they were forced to hire carts, wagons, and horses, and to lift them into their wagons and carts, to carry them before a justice. When they came to a justice's house, sometimes he happened to be from home, or if he was a moderate man, he would get out of the way, and then they were obliged to carry them before another; so that they were

many days carting and carrying Friends up and down from place to place. And when afterwards the officers came to lay their charges for this upon the town, the towns-people would not pay it, but made them bear it themselves, which broke the neck of their persecution there for that time. The like was done in several other places, till the officers had shamed and tired themselves, and then were glad to give over. At one place, they warned Friends to come to the steeple-house. Friends met to consider of it, and finding freedom to go, they met together there. They sat down to wait upon the Lord in his power and spirit, and minded the Lord Jesus Christ their Teacher and Saviour; but did not mind the priest. When the officers saw that, they came to them to put them out of the steeple-house again, but the Friends told them it was not time for them to break up their meeting yet. Awhile after, when the priest had done, they came to the Friends again, and would have had them go home to dinner; but the Friends told they did not choose to go to dinner, they were feeding upon the bread of life.

So there they sat, waiting upon the Lord, and enjoying his power and presence, till they found freedom in themselves to depart. Thus the priest's people were offended, first because they could not get them to the steeple-house, and when there, they were offended because they could not get them out again.'

He also relates many remarkable instances, in which malicious persecutors were either cut off suddenly, or being subjected to great reverses and grievous sufferings, were brought to acknowledge that it had never been well with them, since they afflicted the unresisting servants of God.

It was his firm belief, that the Most High watches over his faithful servants with paternal care, and that all the afflictions permitted to befall them, will ultimately promote their own best interests and the glory of his kingdom. When he sees meet to frustrate the designs of persecutors, he shields his children, and holds them as in the hollow of his hand; and when he permits them to suffer, in order to promote the glori-

ous cause of truth, he fills their hearts with a joyful sense of his presence, he feeds them with heavenly bread, and gives them to drink of that living water, which whosoever drinketh shall never thirst.

CHAPTER XVII.

Visits Colonel Kirby—Is apprehended—His examination by the justices—His trial at the Quarter Sessions—Committed to Lancaster prison—Sufferings of Friends—Margaret Fell committed to prison at Lancaster—Her trial before Judge Twisden—Trial of George Fox—He is remanded to prison.

1663–4.

WHILE on a visit at Swarthmore-hall, the residence of his friend Margaret Fell, George Fox was informed that Colonel Kirby's lieutenant had been there in quest of him. On retiring to rest, he came to the conclusion that it was his religious duty to visit Colonel Kirby, and accordingly he went on the morrow. He found several of the neighbouring gentry there, and after a while the Colonel came in, when George Fox said to him, "I have come to visit thee, understanding thou wast desirous to see me, and I wish to know whether thou hast any thing against me."

COLONEL KIRBY. "I can say as I am a gentleman, I have nothing against you, but Mistress Fell must not keep great meetings at her house, for they meet contrary to the act."

GEORGE FOX. "The act does not take hold on us, but on such as meet to plot and raise insurrections against the king. But thou knowest, they who meet at Margaret Fell's are a peaceable people."

After many words had passed, Colonel Kirby took him by the hand and said again, "I have nothing against you."

Others of the company said, "He was a deserving man."

He then left them and returned to Swarthmore.

Shortly after, when Colonel Kirby had gone to London to attend the Parliament, there was a private meeting of the

justices, and deputy lieutenants, at Houlker-hall, the residence of Justice Preston, where they granted a warrant for the apprehension of George Fox, which he understood was done in pursuance of instructions, left by Colonel Kirby, who, notwithstanding his seeming kindness and moderation, was a secret enemy.

Although George heard of the warrant in time to have gone out of their reach, he concluded to stay and wait the result, for he knew there was a rumour of a plot in the north of England, and he was apprehensive, if he took his departure, they would fall upon his friends. Next day, the officers arrested him at Swarthmore, and Margaret Fell went with him to appear before the justices at Houlker-hall. He found there a number of magistrates, among whom were Preston, Rawlinson, and Middleton.

After some discourse concerning a paper which George Fox had written to warn Friends against meddling with plots, or making any opposition to government, Justice Middleton, who was understood to be a Papist, said to him, "You deny God, and the church, and the faith."

GEORGE FOX. "Nay, I own God, and the true church, and the true faith. But what church dost thou own?"

MIDDLETON. "You are a rebel and a traitor."

GEORGE FOX. "To whom dost thou speak? Or whom dost thou call a rebel?"

MIDDLETON, (much enraged,) "I spoke to you."

GEORGE FOX, (striking his hand upon the table,) "I have suffered more from the king's enemies, than twenty such as thou, or than any that are here; for I have been cast into Derby prison for six months together, and have suffered much, because I would not take up arms against the king before Worcester fight. I have been sent up prisoner out of my own county, by Colonel Hacker, to Oliver Cromwell, as a plotter to bring in king Charles, in the year 1654; and I have nothing but love and good-will to the king, and desire the eternal welfare of him and all his subjects."

MIDDLETON. "Did you ever hear the like?"

GEORGE FOX. "Nay, ye may hear it again, if ye will. For ye talk of the king, a company of you; but where were ye in Oliver's days? I have more love for the king, for his eternal good, than any of you."

Being further interrogated by the justices concerning the plot, and asked why he wrote against it, if he had not known some that were engaged in it, he answered, "My reason was, because you are so forward to crush the innocent and the guilty together, therefore I wrote against it, to clear the truth from such things, and to stop all forward and foolish spirits from running into such things. I sent copies of it into Westmoreland, Cumberland, Bishoprick, Yorkshire, and to you here. I sent another copy to the king and his council."

JUSTICES. "You are against the laws of the land."

GEORGE FOX. "Nay, for I and my friends direct all people to the spirit of God in them, to mortify the deeds of the flesh. This brings them into well doing, and from that which the magistrates' sword is against, which eases the magistrates, who are for the punishment of evil doers." . . . . "In this we establish the law, are an ease to magistrates, and are not against, but stand for all good government."

JUSTICE MIDDLETON. "Bring the book, and put the oaths of allegiance and supremacy to him."

GEORGE FOX. "Hast thou, who art a swearer, taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy? As for us, we cannot swear at all, because Christ and his apostles have forbidden it."

This was a home-thrust; for Middleton, being a Papist, could not take the oaths himself, yet would have tendered them to a Friend, in order to ensnare him, when no other pretext could be found to imprison him.

Some of the justices, being unwilling to tender him the oath, would have set him at liberty; but others would not agree to it. So the oath was tendered to him, which he, of course, declined, and they were about to make out a mittimus for his imprisonment at Lancaster; but on further consideration, they

took his word that he would appear at Lancaster Sessions, and then dismissed him.

He returned to Swarthmore, attended meetings as usual, and when the sessions came on, he appeared in court, agreeably to his engagement. The concourse of people was great, but way being made for him, he came forward, and stood with his hat on. After an interval of silence, he twice said, "Peace be among you." The chairman then said, "Do you know where you are?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes, I do; but it may be my hat offends you. That's a low thing; that's not the honour I give to magistrates, for the true honour is from above; which I have received; and I hope it is not the hat which you look upon to be the honour."

CHAIRMAN. "We look for the hat, too. Wherein do you show respect to magistrates, if you do not put off your hat?"

GEORGE FOX. "By coming when they call me."

His hat was then taken off by an officer of the court, when they began to interrogate him concerning the plot, and in relation to the meetings of Friends; but finding no pretext for his imprisonment, they tendered him the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. He declined to swear, on the same grounds as before; and then justice Rawlinson asked him "whether he held it was unlawful to swear." This was an unwarrantable question, intended to ensnare him; for by an act of Parliament, any one who should say it was "unlawful to swear," was rendered liable to banishment, or a heavy fine. Being aware of their design, he answered, "That in the time of the law amongst the Jews, before Christ came, the law commanded them to swear; but Christ, who doth fulfil the law, in his gospel time commands not to swear at all, and the apostle James forbids swearing even to them that were Jews, and who had the law of God." At length, after much discourse, they committed him to prison.

Many other Friends were then imprisoned at Lancaster; some for meeting to worship God, and others for not swearing,

so that the prison was very full. Some of them being poor men, dependent on their labour for the maintenance of their families, several of their wives went to the magistrates, and told them, "If they kept their husbands in jail for nothing but the truth of Christ, and for good-conscience' sake, they would bring their children to them to be maintained." At length, the justices being continually importuned, released some of the Friends, but kept a number still in prison. Among these were four who had been there nearly two years and a half, having been imprisoned for tithes at the suit of the countess of Derby.

One of them, Oliver Atherton, being of a weakly constitution, was, through the unwholesomeness of the place, so much reduced in strength that his life was considered in imminent danger. His suffering condition was made known to the countess, but she being destitute of all compassion, refused to grant him any relief. On hearing of her refusal, he said, "She hath been the cause of shedding much blood, but this will be the heaviest blood that ever she spilt," and soon after, he died. His body being delivered to his friends, they carried it to Omskirk, the parish where he had lived, and posted papers on the crosses of the towns through which they passed, with this inscription: "This is Oliver Atherton of Omksirk parish, persecuted to death by the countess of Derby for good-conscience' sake towards God and Christ, because he could not give her tithes," &c. She was highly incensed at this proceeding, but still refused to extend mercy to the other prisoners; and within a few weeks she died, and was carried through Omskirk to be buried.

About a month after the imprisonment of George Fox, Margaret Fell, who had now been a widow five years, was summoned before the same justices, then sitting at Alverstone. They questioned her about keeping a meeting at her house, and said they would tender her the oath of allegiance. She answered, "You know I cannot swear; why, then, should you

send for me, from my own house, where I was about my lawful occasions, to ensnare me?"

JUSTICES. "If you will not keep a meeting at your house, we will not tender you the oath."

M. FELL. "I cannot deny my faith nor my principles, for anything you can do against me, and while it shall please the Lord to let me have a house, I shall endeavour to worship Him in it."

They then caused the oath to be read to her, which she refusing to take, they made out a mittimus, and sent her to Lancaster castle, where she remained in prison until the next assizes.* Her examination before Judge Twisden, at the assizes held at Lancaster the 14th of the first month, (March,) 1664, is thus related by herself: "She was called to the bar, and then an order was given to the jailor by the judge, to set a stool and a cushion for her to sit upon. She had four of her daughters with her, and the judge said, "Let not Mrs. Fell's daughters stand at the bar, but let them come up hither; they shall not stand at the bar." So they were handed up and set near the judge.

Then the mittimus being read, she stood up to the bar, and the judge spoke to her as follows:

JUDGE. "Mrs. Fell, you are committed by the justices of peace for refusing to take the oath of obedience; and I am commanded, and sent by the king, to tender it to any that shall refuse it."

M. FELL. I was sent for from my own house and family, but for what cause or transgression I do not know."

JUDGE. "I am informed by the justices of peace in this county, that you keep multitudes of people at your house, in pretence to worship God; and it may be you worship Him in part, but we are not to dispute that."

M. FELL. "I have the king's word from his own mouth, that he would not hinder me of my religion. 'God forbid,' (said he,) 'that I should hinder you of your religion, you may

* Life of M. Fox, p. 7.

keep it in your own house.' And I appeal to all the country, whether those people that meet at my house, be not a peaceable, a quiet, and a godly honest people? And whether there hath been any just occasion of offence given by the meeting that was held in my house."

JUDGE. "If you will give security that you will have no more meetings, I will not tender the oath to you:—You think if there be no fighting nor quarrelling amongst you, that you keep the peace, and break no law; but I tell you that you are a breaker of the law, by keeping unlawful meetings: And again you break the law, in that you will not take the oath of allegiance."

M. FELL. "I desire that I may have liberty to answer to those two things which are charged against me. And first, for that which is looked upon to be matter of fact, which is concerning our meetings. There are several of my neighbours that are of the same faith, principle, and spirit and judgment that I am of; and these are they that meet at my house, and I can not shut my doors against them."

JUDGE. "Mrs., you begin at the wrong end, for the first is the oath."

M. FELL. "I suppose that the first occasion of tendering me the oath, was because of meeting; but as for that, if I have begun at the wrong end, I shall begin at the other. And first, then, as to the oath, the substance of which is allegiance to the king: And this I shall say, as for my allegiance, I love, own, and honour the king, and desire his peace and welfare; and that we may live a peaceable, a quiet, and a godly life under his government, according to the scriptures; and this is my allegiance to the king. And as for the oath itself, Christ Jesus, the King of kings, hath commanded me not to swear at all, neither by Heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath."

The judge then called for the statute book, and the grand jury to be present. One of the justices that committed her, said, 'Mrs. Fell, you know that before the oath was tendered

to you, we offered, that if you would put in security to have no more meetings at your house, we would not tender you the oath."

M. FELL. "I shall not deny that."

JUDGE. "If you will yet put in security that you will have no more meetings, I will not tender the oath to you."

M. FELL. "I speak to the judge, the court, and the rest of the people: You all here profess to be christians, and likewise you profess the scriptures to be your rule; so in answer to those things that are laid against me—Christ Jesus hath left upon record in the scripture, 'That God is a spirit, and that his worship is in the spirit and truth, and that he seeketh such to worship him,' John, iv. 24. In which spirit, I, and these that meet at my house, do meet, and worship God, in obedience to Christ's commands.

"Secondly: The same Christ Jesus, hath commanded in plain words, that I should not swear at all, and for obedience to Christ's doctrine and command am I here arraigned this day: So you being Christians, and professing the same thing in words, judge of these things according to that of God in your consciences; and I appeal to all the country, whether ever those meetings did any hurt or prejudice."

JUDGE. "You are not here, for obedience to Christ's commands, but for keeping of unlawful meetings. And you think, that if you do not fight and quarrel, or break the peace, that you break no law; but there is a law against unlawful meetings."

M. FELL. "What law have I broken, for worshipping God in my own house?"

JUDGE. "The common law."

M. FELL. "I thought you had proceeded by a statute."

Then the Sheriff whispered to him, and mentioned the statute of 35th of Elizabeth.

JUDGE. "I could tell you of a law, but it is too penal for you, for it might cost you your life."

M. Fell. "I must offer and tender my life, and, all for my testimony, if it be required of me."

Then the latter part of the statute was read to the jury, for the oath of obedience.

And the judge informed the jury, and the prisoner, concerning the penalty of the statute, upon refusal; for it would be to the forfeiture of all her estate, real and personal, and imprisonment during life.

M. Fell. "I am a widow, and my estate is a dowry, and I have five children unpreferred; and if the king's pleasure be to take my estate from me, upon the account of my conscience and for not any evil or wrong done, let him do as he pleaseth. And further, I desire that I may speak to the jury, of the occasion of my being here."

Judge. "The jury is to hear nothing but me, to tender you the oath, and you to refuse it, or take it."

M. Fell. "You will let me have the liberty that other prisoners have."—And then she turned to the jury, and said, "Friends, I am here this day upon the account of my conscience, and not for any evil or wrong done to any man, but for obeying Christ's doctrine and commands, who hath said in the scripture, 'That God is a spirit, and that his worship is in the spirit and truth:' And for keeping meetings in the unity of this spirit, and for obeying Christ's commands, and doctrine, who hath said, 'Swear not at all,' am I here arraigned this day. Now, you profess yourselves to be Christians, and you own the scripture to be true; and for the obedience of the plain words of scripture, and for the testimony of my conscience, am I here. So I now appeal to the witness of God in all your consciences, to judge of me according to that.

"First: You are to consider this statute, what it was made for, and for whom. It was made to manifest the Papists, and the oath was for allegiance to the king. Now let your consciences judge, whether we be the people that it was made for, who cannot swear any oath at all, only for conscience sake, because Christ commands not to swear at all."

Then the judge seemed to be angry, and said, she was not there upon the account of her conscience; and said, "You have an everlasting tongue, you draw the whole court after you;" but she continued speaking on, and he still crying, "Will you take the oath or no?"

M. Fell. "It is upon the account of my conscience, for if I could have sworn, I had not been here."

"Secondly: If I would not have meetings in my house, I need not have the oath tendered to me; and so I desire the jury to take notice, that it is only for those two things that I am here arraigned, which are only upon the account of my conscience, and not for any evil done against any man." Then the judge was angry again, and bid them tender her the oath, and hold her the book.

Judge. "Will you take the oath of allegiance, yea or nay?"

M. Fell. "I have said already, I own allegiance and obedience to the king, and his just and lawful commands. And I do also own allegiance and obedience to Christ Jesus, who is the King of kings, who hath commanded me not to swear at all."

Judge. "That is no answer: will you take the oath, or not take it?"

M. Fell. "I say I owe obedience and allegiance unto Christ Jesus, who commands me not to swear at all."

Judge. "I say unto you that is no answer—will you take it, or will you not take it?"

M. Fell. "If you should ask me never so often, I must answer to you, that the reason why I cannot take it, is because Christ hath commanded me not to swear at all; I owe my allegiance and obedience unto him."

Then one of the justices that committed her said, "Mistress Fell, you may with a good conscience (if you cannot take the oath) put in security, that you will have no more meetings at your house."

M. Fell. "Wilt thou make it good, that I may with a

safe conscience make an engagement to forbear meetings, for fear of losing my liberty and estate? Wilt not thou, and all you here, judge of me, that it was for saving of my estate and liberty that I did it? And should not I in this deny my testimony, and would not this defile my conscience?"

JUDGE. "This is no answer—will you take the oath? We must not spend time."

M. FELL. "I never took an oath in my life; I have spent my days thus far, and I never took an oath; I own allegiance to the king, as he is king of England; but Christ Jesus is king of my conscience."

Then the clerk held out the book, and bid her pull off her glove, and lay her hand on the book.

M. FELL. "I never laid my hand on the book to swear in all my life, and I never was at the assizes here before; I was bred and born in this county, and have led my life in it, and I never was at any assize before this time; and I bless the Lord that I am here this day, upon this account, to bear testimony to the truth."

Then they asked her, "If she would have the oath read?" She answered, "I do not care if I never hear an oath read; for the land mourns because of oaths."

Then the judge cried, "Take her away;" and asked her, "If she would give security that she would have no more meetings?"

M. FELL. "Nay, I can give no such security; I have spoken enough for that." . . . . "And so they took her civilly away."*

George Fox was then called to the bar, and said, "Peace be amongst you all."

JUDGE. "What! do you come into the court with your hat on." Upon which the jailer took it off.

GEORGE FOX. "The hat is not the honour that comes from God."

---

* Life of M. Fell, 277–82.

JUDGE. "Will you take the oath of allegiance, George Fox?"

GEORGE FOX. "I never took any oath in my life, nor any covenant or engagement."

JUDGE. "Well, will you swear or no?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am a Christian, and Christ commands me not to swear; so does the apostle James; and whether I should obey God or man, do thou judge."

JUDGE. "I ask you again, whether you will swear or no?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am neither Turk, Jew, nor heathen, but a Christian, and should show forth Christianity. Dost thou not know that Christians, in the primitive times, under the ten persecutions, and some also of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days, refused swearing, because Christ and the apostles had forbidden it? Ye have had experience enough, how many have first sworn for the king, and then against him. But as for me, I have never taken an oath in my life. My allegiance does not lie in swearing, but in truth and faithfulness; for I honour all men, much more the king. But Christ, who is the great prophet, the king of kings, the Saviour and judge of the whole world, saith, 'I must not swear.' Now, whether must I obey Christ or thee? For it is through tenderness of conscience, and in obedience to the command of Christ, that I do not swear; and we have the word of the king for tender consciences. Dost thou own the king?"

JUDGE. "I do own the king."

GEORGE FOX. "Why then dost thou not observe his declaration from Breda, and his promises made since he came to England: 'That no man should be called in question for matters of religion, so long as he lived peaceably?' If thou ownest the king, why dost thou call me in question, and put me upon taking an oath, which is a matter of religion, seeing neither thou nor any one else can charge me with unpeaceable living?"

JUDGE, (irritated and looking at him,) "Sirrah! will you swear?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am none of thy sirrahs, I am a Christian; and for thee, an old man and a judge, to sit there and give nicknames to prisoners, does not become either thy grey hairs or thy office."

JUDGE. "Well, I am a Christian, too."

GEORGE FOX. "Then do Christian works."

JUDGE. "Sirrah! thou thinkest to frighten me with thy words." Then checking himself, and looking aside, he said, "Hark! I am using the word sirrah again," and so checked himself.

GEORGE FOX. "I spoke to thee in love; for that language did not become thee, a judge. Thou oughtest to instruct a prisoner in the law, if he were ignorant, and out of the way."

JUDGE. "And I speak in love to thee, too."

GEORGE FOX. "But love gives no nicknames."

JUDGE, (rousing himself up,) "I will not be afraid of thee, George Fox. Thou speakest so loud, thy voice drowns mine and the court's; I must call for three or four criers to drown thy voice: thou hast good lungs."

GEORGE FOX. "I am a prisoner here for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and if my voice were five times louder, I should lift it up, and sound it out for Christ's sake; for whose cause I stand this day before your judgment-seat, in obedience to him who commands 'not to swear,' before whose judgment-seat you must all be brought, and must give an account."

JUDGE. "Well, George Fox, say whether thou wilt take the oath, yea or nay?"

GEORGE FOX. "I say as I said before, 'Whether ought I to obey God or man, judge thou? If I could take any oath at all, I should take this; for I do not deny some oaths only, or on some occasions, but all oaths, according to Christ's doctrine, who hath commanded his followers, 'Not to swear at all.' Now, if thou, or any of you, or any of your ministers or priests here, will prove that ever Christ or his apostles,

after they had forbidden all swearing, commanded Christians to swear, then I will swear."

Several priests were there, but none of them offered to speak.

JUDGE. "I am a servant of the king, and the king sent me not to dispute with you, but to put the law in execution; therefore tender him the oath of allegiance."

GEORGE FOX. "If thou love the king, why dost thou break his word, and not keep his declarations and speeches, wherein he promised liberty to tender consciences? I am a man of a tender conscience, and, in obedience to Christ's command, I cannot swear."

JUDGE. "Then you will not swear? Take him away, jailer."

GEORGE FOX. "It is for Christ's sake that I cannot swear, and for obedience to his command I suffer; and so the Lord forgive you all."

He was then remanded to prison.

Two days afterwards, Margaret Fell and George Fox were again brought into court, and she being first placed at the bar, the examination proceeded as follows:

JUDGE. "Mrs. Fell, you stand here indicted by the statute, because you will not take the oath of allegiance; and I am here to inform you what the law provides for you in such a case. First, if you confess to the indictment, then the judgment of a premunire is to pass upon you. Secondly, if you plead, you have liberty to traverse. Thirdly, if you stand mute, and say nothing at all, judgment will be passed against you. So see which you will choose of these three ways."

M. FELL. "I am altogether ignorant of those things, for I had never the like occasion; so I desire to be informed by thee, which of these is the best for me, for I do not know." And then several about the court cried "traverse, traverse."

JUDGE. "If you will be advised by me, put in your traverse, and so you have liberty until the next assizes to answer your indictment."

M. Fell. "I had rather, according to thy own proposal, have a process, that I might have liberty till the next assizes, and then to put in a traverse."

Judge. "Your traverse is a process."

M. Fell. "May not I have a process, and put in my traverse the next assizes? I am informed that was the thing thou didst intend I should have."

Judge. "You shall have it."

M. Fell. "That is all I desire now."

Then a clerk of the crown-office stood up, and whispering to the judge, said it was contrary to law, and she must put in her traverse now.

Judge. "I would do you all the favour I can, but you must enter your traverse now."

M. Fell. "I acknowledge thy favour and mercy; for thou hast shown more mercy than my neighbours have done; and I see what thou hast done for me, and what my neighbours have done against me, and I know very well how to make a distinction: for they, who have done this against me, have no reason for it."

Judge. "I have done you no wrong, I found you here."

M. Fell. "I had not been here, but by my neighbours."

Judge. "What say you, are you willing to traverse?"

M. Fell. "If I may not be permitted to have that which I desire, that is, longer time, I must be willing to traverse, till the next assizes; and that upon this account, that I have something to inform thee of, which I did not speak on the last time when I was brought before thee, viz: the justices who committed me, told me, they had express order from above; but they did not show me the order, neither indeed did I ask them for it; but I heard since, that they have given out in the country, that they had an order from the council; others said, that they had an order from the king; the sheriff said, that there was express order; and also justice Fleming said, 'there was an order from the king and council;' so the country is incensed, that I am some great enemy to the king. So

I desire that I may have this order read, that I may know what my offence is, that I may clear myself."

JUDGE. "I will tell you what that order is: we have express order from the king to put all laws and statutes in execution, not only against you, but all other people, and against Papists, if they be complained of."

M. FELL. "Will that order give the justice of peace power to fetch me from my own house, to tender me the oath?"

JUDGE. "Mrs., we are all in love; if they say they had an order, believe they had one."

M. FELL. "If they have one, let them show it, and then I can believe it."

JUDGE. "Come, come, enter your traverse."

M. FELL. "I had rather have had more time, that I might have informed the king concerning these things."

JUDGE. "You may inform the king in half a year's time. So now let us have your friend called up."

Then, after she was gone down, the judge called her back again, and said, "If you will put in bail, you may go home, and have your liberty till the next assizes; but you must not have such frequent meetings."

M. FELL. "I will rather lie where I am; for, as I told you before, I must keep my conscience clear, for which I suffer."

George Fox being next called up, the judge asked him, "Whether he would traverse, stand mute, or submit?" He "desired that he might have liberty to traverse the indictment and try it."

JUDGE. "Take him away; I will have nothing to do with him; take him away."

GEORGE FOX. "Well, live in the fear of God and do justice."

JUDGE. "Why, have I not done you justice?"

GEORGE FOX. "That which thou hast done hath been against the command of Christ." Upon this, he was again conducted to prison, to await the next assizes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

George Fox and M. Fell continue in Lancaster Castle—Sufferings of prisoners—They are again brought before the Judges—Their trial, and sentence pronounced—They are remanded to prison—A vision of George Fox.

1664–5.

THROUGHOUT the spring and summer of 1664, George Fox, Margaret Fell, and John Stubbs, with many other Friends, still continued prisoners in Lancaster castle. Their place of confinement being extremely damp and unwholesome, another of their number was removed by death, leaving five orphan children to bemoan his loss. Others of these prisoners were poor men, whose families were dependent on their daily labour, and now their wives and children were left destitute by the unrelenting cruelty of their persecutors.

How great must have been the bigotry and intolerance of those magistrates and judges, as well as of the clergy at whose instigation they generally acted; when they could keep immured in such noisome prisons their inoffensive neighbours, merely for refusing to swear, and for worshipping God according to their convictions of duty. It might have been supposed that the high social position of Margaret Fell, with her own dignity of character, would have received some consideration from those who had known and respected her late husband; but they were no less insensible to the promptings of honourable feeling than deaf to the cries of humanity.

Among the prisoners at the castle was Major Wiggan, a Baptist minister, who challenged the Friends to a religious discussion. George Fox obtained leave to go into his room, and has left in his Journal an account of their conversation. Wiggan affirmed "that some men never had the spirit of God, and that the true light which enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world, is natural." For proof of his first

assertion, he instanced Balaam, affirming that "Balaam had not the spirit of God." George Fox affirmed and proved that "Balaam had the spirit of God, and that wicked men have it, else how could they quench it, vex it, grieve it, and resist the Holy Ghost like the stiff-necked Jews." He stated, moreover, that the true light spoken of in the first of John, is not natural, but divine and eternal. It could not be the scriptures of the New Testament, because it was testified of before any part of the New Testament was written. It is the spirit of truth,—the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which leads the disciples of Christ into all truth, but reproves the world of sin.

The assizes were again held at Lancaster, the 20th of the 7th month (September) 1664, by Judges Twisden and Turner, when George Fox and Margaret Fell were brought before them. Judge Turner being on the crown bench, called Margaret Fell to the bar, and her trial proceeded as follows:*

JUDGE. "Come, will you take the oath."

M. FELL. "There is a clause in the indictment, that the church-wardens informed of some things, which seem that that should be the ground or first occasion of this indictment; I desire to know what that information was, and what the transgression was, by which I came under this law."

JUDGE. "Mrs., we are not to dispute that; you are here indicted, and you are here to answer, and to plead to your indictment."

M. FELL. "I am first to seek out the ground and the cause wherefore I am indicted; the law is made for the lawless and transgressor, and except I be a transgressor, you have no law against me, neither ought you to have indicted me: for it being that the church-wardens did inform, my question is, what matter of fact did they inform of? For I was sent for from my own house, from amongst my children and family, when I was about my outward occasions, and

* Life of M. Fell, p. 284–7.

when I was in no meeting, neither was it a meeting day. Therefore I desire to know what the first foundation, or matter of fact was; for there is no law against the innocent and righteous; and if I be a transgressor, let me know wherein."

JUDGE. "You say well, the law is made for transgressors." "But, Mistress, do you go to church?"

M. FELL. "I do go to church."

JUDGE. "What church?"

M. FELL. "To the church of Christ."

JUDGE. "But do you go to church amongst other people? Ye know what I mean."

M. FELL. "What dost thou call a church, the house or the people? The house, ye all know, is wood and stone. But if thou call the people a church; to that I shall answer, as for the Church of England that now is, I was gathered unto the Lord's truth, unto which I now stand a witness, which truth was before their church was a church; and I was separated from the general worship of the nation, when there was another power up, than that which now is, and was persecuted by that power which then was, and suffered much hardship: and would you have us now to deny our faith and principles, which we have suffered for so many years? And would you now have us turn from that which we have been witnesses of for so many years, and turn to your church contrary to our consciences?"

JUDGE. "We spend time about these things; come to the matter in hand—what say you to the oath, and to the indictment?"

M. FELL. "I say this to the oath, as I have said in this place before now, Christ Jesus hath commanded me not to swear at all; and that is the only cause, and no other; the righteous judge of Heaven and earth knows, before whose throne of justice you must all appear one day, and his eye sees us all, and beholds us at this present, and he hears and sees all our words and actions, and therefore every one ought

to be serious, for the place of judgment is weighty. And this I do testify unto you here, where the Lord's eye beholds us all, that for the matter or substance of the oath, and the end for which it was intended, I do own one part, and deny the other, that is to say, I do own truth and faithfulness, and obedience to the king, in all his just and lawful demands and commands. I do also deny all plottings and contrivings against the king, and all popish supremacy and conspiracy, and I can no more transgress against King Charles in these things, than I can disobey Jesus Christ's commands. And by the same power and virtue of the same word, which hath commanded me not to swear at all, the same doth bind me in my conscience, that I can neither plot nor contrive against the king, nor do him, nor any man upon the earth, any wrong: and I do not deny this oath only because it is the oath of allegiance, but I deny it because it is an oath, and because Christ Jesus hath said, 'Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, nor by earth, nor any other oath;' and if I might gain the whole world for swearing of an oath, I could not; and whatever I have to lose this day, for not swearing of an oath, I am willing to offer it up."

JUDGE. "What say you to the indictment?"

M. FELL. "What should I say? I am clear and innocent of wronging any man upon the earth, as my little child that stands by me here; and if any here have anything to lay to my charge, let them come down and testify it here before you all; and if I be clear and innocent, you have no law against me: you have work enough besides, if you do not meddle with the innocent, and them that fear the Lord."

Then Colonel Kirby whispered to the Judge, which M. Fell observing, said, "Let us have no whisperings. Colonel Kirby, if thou hast anything to lay to my charge, come down here and testify against me. The Judge represents the king's person and his power, and that I own."

JUDGE. "Jury, take notice she doth not take the oath."

M. FELL. "This matter is weighty to me, whatsoever it is

to you, upon many accounts; and I would have the jury to take notice of it, and to consider seriously what they are going to do: for, first, I stand here before you upon the account of the loss of my liberty, and my estate: secondly, I stand here for obeying Christ's command, and so keeping my conscience clear, which, if I obey this law, and King Charles' command, I defile my conscience, and transgress against Christ Jesus, who is the king of my conscience; and the cause and the controversy in this matter, that you all are to judge of here this day, is betwixt Christ Jesus and King Charles; and I am his servant and witness this day, and this is his cause, and whatever I suffer, it is for him, and so let him plead my cause when he pleaseth."

Then the judge said to the jury, "Are you all agreed? Have you found it?" And they said, "For the king."*

Margaret Fell then told the judge she had counsel to plead to her indictment, and he said he would hear them in the afternoon in arrest of judgment. Then the court adjourned.

In the afternoon they were again called into court, when Margaret Fell stepped up to the bar, and requested the judge to give them time till the next morning to bring in their arrest of judgment, which he granted.

As she was about to withdraw he said, "Mrs. Fell, you wrote to me concerning your prisons, that they were bad, that the rain comes in, and that they are not fit for people to lie in. I spoke to the Sheriff about it, and he said he did not know." She answered, "The Sheriff does know, and has been told of it several times; and now it is raining, if you will send to see, you may know whether they are fit for people to lie in or not."

Colonel Kirby then stood up to excuse the Sheriff. Margaret Fell turning to him, said, "If you were to lie in it yourselves you would think it hard, but your minds are only bent on cruelty, to commit others; as William Kirby has

* M. Fell's Life, 285–8.

done, who has committed ten of our Friends, and put them into a cold room with nothing but bare boards to lie upon, where they have lain several nights, although some of them are aged men, above three score years, and known by their neighbours to be honest men."

Next morning, they were brought into court, when Margaret Fell, standing at the bar, said she had counsel to plead for her, whom she named: "But," she added, "I have a few words to speak before them: I see that all sorts of prisoners who appear before the judge, receive what mercy the law will afford them, but we desire only to receive justice and law." The judge replied, "What else are we here for?" Margaret Fell's counsel then spoke, and showed the judge several errors and contradictions in the indictment, some of which he seemed to consider and others to waive: but seeming dissatisfied, he made a pause and called George Fox to the bar.

In the afternoon Margaret Fell was again called before the court, to hear sentence of premunire pronounced against her. She reminded the judge that he had said to her counsel, she might have a writ of error to reverse it: he answered, "She should have what the law afforded her." She then said, "The Lord forgive thee what thou hast done; for this law was made for Popish recusants, but ye pass sentence on but few of them."* This cruel sentence declared that she should be out of the king's protection, and forfeit all her estate, real and personal, to the king, and be imprisoned during life." She was mercifully supported under this severe trial, and said to the judge, "Although I am out of the king's protection, yet I am not out of the protection of the Almighty God." She was then remanded to prison.

Meanwhile the trial of George Fox had been proceeding. When first brought into court he was placed among the felons and murderers, and after being thus exposed to the public gaze for two hours, he was called to the bar. A jury being

* Life of M. Fox, p. 290.

empannelled, the judge inquired of the justices, "Whether they had tendered him the oath at the sessions?" They answered, "They had." He said, "Give them the book, that they may swear they tendered him the oath according to the indictment." Some of the justices refused to be sworn, but the judge said he would have it done to take away all occasion of exception.

When the jury was sworn, and the justices had sworn that, "They had tendered the oath according to the indictment," the judge asked George Fox, "Whether he had not refused the oath at the last assizes?"

GEORGE FOX. "I never took an oath in my life, and Christ, the Saviour and Judge of the world, said, 'Swear not at all.'"

JUDGE, (not heeding this answer.) "I ask whether or no, you did not refuse the oath at the last assizes?"

GEORGE FOX. "The words that I then spake to them were, that if they would prove, either judge, justice, priest, or teacher, that after Christ and the apostles had forbidden swearing, they commanded that Christians should swear, I would swear."

JUDGE. "I am not at this time to dispute whether it is lawful to swear, but to inquire whether you have refused to take the oath or no?"

GEORGE FOX. "These things mentioned in the oath, as plotting against the king, and owning the pope's, or any other foreign power, I utterly deny."

JUDGE. "Well, you say well in that, but did you deny to take the oath? What say you?"

GEORGE FOX. "What wouldst thou have me to say? for I have told thee before what I did say."

JUDGE. "Would you have these men to swear that you have taken the oath?"

GEORGE FOX. "Wouldst thou have these men to swear that I had refused the oath?" At which the court burst out into laughter. "I was grieved," he says, "to see so much

lightness in the court, where such solemn matters were handled, and therefore asked him, 'If this court was a playhouse? Where is gravity and sobriety? for this behaviour does not become you.' The clerk then read the indictment, and I told the judge I had something to speak to it, for I had informed myself of the errors that were in it. He told me he would hear afterwards any reasons that I could allege why he should not give judgment. Then I spoke to the jury, and told them they could not bring me in guilty, according to that indictment, for the indictment was wrong laid, and had many gross errors in it."

JUDGE. "You must not speak to the jury, but I will speak to them; you have denied to take the oath at the last assizes, and I can tender the oath to any man now, and premunire him for not taking it, and the jury must bring you in guilty, seeing you refuse to take the oath."

GEORGE FOX. "What do ye with a form? you may throw away your form then." To the jury.—"It lies upon your consciences, as ye would answer it to the Lord God before his judgment-seat." 'Then the judge spoke again to the jury, and I called to him to do me justice. The jury brought me in guilty. Whereupon I told them that both the justices and they had forsworn themselves, and therefore they had small cause to laugh as they did a little before. Oh! the envy, rage, and malice that appeared against me, and the lightness; but the Lord confounded them, and they were wonderfully stopped. Upon my complaining of the badness of my prison, some of the justices, with Colonel Kirby, went up to see it, but when they came, they durst hardly go in, the floor was so bad and dangerous, and the place so open to the wind and rain. Some of the magistrates declared that it was a most filthy place, and when Colonel Kirby saw and heard what was said of it, he excused the matter as well as he could, saying, 'I should be removed, ere it was long, to some more convenient place.'"

The following day, he and Margaret Fell were again brought into court, and after some time spent in her trial, as already related, he was called to the bar.

JUDGE. "What have you to say why I should not pass sentence upon you?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am no lawyer; but I have much to say, if thou wilt but have patience to hear." At that the judge laughed, and others also laughed, and he said, "Come, what have you to say?" and turning to the court, "He can say nothing."

GEORGE FOX. "Yes, I have much to say; have but patience to hear me. Should the oath be tendered to the king's subjects, or the subjects of another realm?"

JUDGE. "To the subjects of this realm."

GEORGE FOX. "Look into the indictment; ye may see ye have left out the word subject; so, not having named me in the indictment as a subject, ye cannot premunire me for not taking the oath."

Then they looked over the statute and the indictment, and saw it was so; and the judge confessed it was an error.

GEORGE FOX. "I have something else to stop judgment; look what day the indictment says the oath was tendered to me at the sessions there."

They looked and said, "It was the 11th day of January."

GEORGE FOX. "What day of the week was the sessions held on?"

"On a Tuesday," was the reply of some one in court.

GEORGE FOX. "Look to your almanacs, and see whether there were held any sessions at Lancaster on the 11th day of January, so called?" So they looked, and found that the 11th day was Monday, and that the sessions were held on the Tuesday, the 12th day of the month. "Look now, ye have indicted me for refusing the oath in the Quarter-Sessions held at Lancaster, on the 11th day of January last, and the justices have sworn that they tendered me the oath in open sessions here, on that day, and the jury, upon their oaths, have found me guilty thereupon; and yet ye see there was no session held in Lancaster that day."

JUDGE, (to cover the matter, asked) "Whether the sessions did not begin on the 11th day?"

Some one in court answered, "No, the sessions held but one day, and that was the 12th."

JUDGE. "This is a great mistake and error."

Some of the justices were in a great rage at this, and stamped, and said, "Who hath done this? Somebody hath done this on purpose," and a great heat was amongst them.

GEORGE FOX. "Are not the justices here that have sworn to this indictment, forsworn men in the face of the country? But this is not all; I have more yet to offer why sentence should not be given against me. In what year of the king was the last assize holden, which happened in the month of March last?"

JUDGE. "It was in the sixteenth year of the king."

GEORGE FOX. "The indictment lays it in the fifteenth year."

They looked and found it so, which was also acknowledged to be another error. "Then," he says, "they were all in a fret again, and could not tell what to say; for the judge had sworn the officers of the court, that the oath was tendered to me at the assizes mentioned in the indictment."

GEORGE FOX. "Now, is not the court here forsworn also, who have sworn that the oath was tendered to me at the assize holden here in the fifteenth year of the king, when it was in his sixteenth year; and so they have sworn a year false."

The judge then bid them look whether Margaret Fell's indictment was the same, but found it not so.

GEORGE FOX. "I have more yet to offer to stop sentence: ought all the oath to be put into the indictment, or not?"

JUDGE. "Yes, it ought to be all put in."

GEORGE FOX. "Then compare the indictment with the oath, and there thou mayest see these words (or by any authority derived, or pretended to be derived, from him or his fee) left out of the indictment, which is the principal part of the

oath; and in another place the words (heirs and successors) are left out."

The judge acknowledged these also to be great errors.

GEORGE FOX. "But I have something further to allege."

JUDGE. "Nay, I have enough, you need say no more."

GEORGE FOX. "If thou hast enough, I desire nothing but law and justice at thy hands, for I don't look for mercy."

JUDGE. "You must have justice, and you shall have law."

GEORGE FOX. "Am I at liberty, and free from all that hath been done against me in this matter?"

JUDGE. "Yes, you are free from all that hath been done against you." But, starting up in a rage, he exclaimed, "I can put the oath to any man here, and I will tender you the oath again."

GEORGE FOX. "Thou hadst example enough yesterday of swearing and false swearing both in the justices and jury; for I saw before mine eyes that both justices and jury had forsworn themselves."

JUDGE. "Will you take the oath?"

GEORGE FOX. "Do me justice for my false imprisonment all this while; for what have I been imprisoned so long? I ought to be set at liberty."

JUDGE. "You are at liberty; but I will put the oath to you again."

George Fox then turned about, and said, "All people, take notice, this is a snare; for I ought to be set free from the jailer and from this court."

JUDGE. "Give him the book."

"Then," he continues, "the power of darkness rose in them like a mountain, and the clerk lifted up a book to me. I stood still, and said, 'If it be a bible, give it to me into my hand.' 'Yes, yes,' said both judge and justices, 'give it him into his hand.' So I took it, and looked into it, and said, 'I see it is a bible. I am glad of it.'"

The judge caused the jury to be called, and they stood by; for after they had brought in their former verdict, he would

not discharge them, though they desired it; but told them he could not dismiss them yet, he should have business for them; therefore they must attend and be ready when they were called. When he said so, I felt his intent—that if I was freed, he would come on again. So I looked him in the face, and the witness of God started up in him, and made him blush when he looked at me again; for he saw that I had discovered him. Nevertheless, hardening himself, he caused the oath to be read to me, the jury standing by. When it was read, he asked me, 'Whether I would take the oath or not?'"

George Fox. "Ye have given me a book here to kiss, and to swear on, and this book which ye have given me to kiss says, 'Kiss the Son,' and the Son says in this book, 'Swear not at all,' and so says the apostle James. I say as the book says, yet ye imprison me. How chance ye do not imprison the book for saying so? How comes it that the book is at liberty, amongst you, which bids me not swear, and yet ye imprison me for doing as the book bids me."

"I was speaking this to them, and held up the bible open in my hand to show them the place where Christ forbade swearing. They plucked the book out of my hand, and the judge said, 'Nay, but we will imprison George Fox.'

"Yet this got about all over the country as a by-word, 'That they gave me a book to swear on, that commanded me not to swear at all, and the bible was at liberty, and I in prison for doing what the bible said.'"

The judge still urged him to swear, and George Fox said, "I never took oath, covenant, or engagement in my life; but my yea and nay was more binding in me than an oath was to many others; for had they not had experience how little men regarded an oath? and how they had sworn one way, and then another? and how the justices and court had forsworn themselves now? I was a man of a tender conscience, and if they had any sense of a tender conscience, they would consider that it was in obedience to Christ's command that I could not swear. But if any one of you can convince me, that after

Christ and the apostles had commanded not to swear, they altered that command, and commanded christians to swear, ye shall see that I will swear. There being many priests in the court, I said, 'If ye cannot do it, let your priests stand up and do it.' But not one of the priests made answer."

JUDGE. "Oh! all the world cannot convince you."

GEORGE FOX. "No, how is it likely the world should convince me? The whole world lies in wickedness. Bring out your spiritual men, as ye call them, to convince me."

Both the sheriff and the judge said, "The angels swore in the Revelation."

GEORGE FOX. "When God bringeth his first-begotten Son into the world, he saith, 'Let all the angels of God worship him;' and the Son saith, 'Swear not at all.' "

JUDGE. "Nay, I will not dispute."

GEORGE FOX, (to the jury). "It is for Christ's sake that I cannot swear, and therefore I warn you not to act contrary to the light of God in your consciences; for before his judgment-seat you must all be brought. As for plots, and persecutions for religion, and popery, I deny them in my heart; for I am a christian, and shall show forth christianity among you this day. It is for Christ I stand. More words I had, both with the judge and jury, before the jailer took me away."

In the afternoon he was brought up again, and placed among the thieves for a considerable time, where he stood with his hat on till the jailer took it off. The jury having found this new indictment against him, "for not taking the oath," he was then called to the bar.

JUDGE. "What can you say for yourself?"

GEORGE FOX. "I request the indictment to be read; for I cannot answer to that which I have not heard."

The clerk then read it, and as he read it, the judge said, "Take heed it be not false again;" but he read it in such a manner that George Fox could hardly understand what he read.

When he had done, the judge said, "What do you say to the indictment?"

GEORGE FOX. "At once hearing so large a writing read, and that at such a distance that I could not distinctly hear all the parts of it, I cannot tell what to say; but if thou wilt let me have a copy of it, and give me time to consider of it, I will answer it."

This put them to a little stand; but after awhile the judge asked, "What time I would have?"

GEORGE FOX. "Till the next assize."

JUDGE. "But what plea will you now make? Are you guilty or not guilty?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am not guilty of denying to swear obstinately and wilfully; and as for those things mentioned in the oath, as jesuitical plots, and foreign powers, I utterly deny them in my heart. If I could take any oath, I could take this; but I never took any oath in my life."

JUDGE. "You say well; but the king is sworn, the parliament is sworn, I am sworn, and the justices are sworn, and the law is preserved by oaths."

GEORGE FOX. "Ye have had sufficient experience of men's swearing, and thou hast seen how the justices and jury had sworn wrong the other day; and if thou hadst read in the Book of Martyrs, how many of them had refused to swear, both in the time of the ten persecutions, and in Bishop Bonner's days, thou mightst see that to deny swearing, in obedience to Christ's command, was no new thing."

JUDGE. "I wish the laws were otherwise."

GEORGE FOX. "Our yea is yea, and our nay is nay, and if we transgress our yea or nay, let us suffer as they do, or should do, who swear falsely. This we had offered to the king, and the king said 'it was reasonable.'"

After some further discourse, he was remanded to prison, there to lie till the next assize, and Colonel Kirby again interfered to aggravate his sufferings, by directing the jailer, "To keep him close, and to suffer no flesh alive to come at him."

He was now put into an old ruinous tower of the castle,

where the smoke from the prisoners below came up so thick, that it obscured the light, and stood as dew upon the walls, insomuch that the under-jailer could scarcely be persuaded to enter. The room was so open, that the rain came in upon the bed, and saturated his clothes. In this suffering condition he was compelled to pass a long, cold winter; during which his body became swollen, and his limbs benumbed.

Margaret Fell was imprisoned in another apartment of the same castle, where she was detained twenty months, without being permitted to go to her own house. She was then allowed to go home for a short time, but was required to return to prison, where she remained until liberated by the king, in 1668, having been a prisoner four years. During her imprisonment, she wrote a number of epistles and tracts on religious subjects, which were published, and afford evidence of her piety and earnest devotion to the cause of truth.

In a letter, written from Lancaster castle, to her son-in-law, John Rouse, and his wife, she says, "I am very well contented." . . . . . "Be all satisfied and content with the will of the Lord; and let neither murmuring nor repining enter any of your minds; and let not sorrow fill your hearts, for we have all cause to rejoice in the Lord evermore, and I most of all."*

The spring assizes at Lancaster came on the 16th of March, (then the 1st month) 1665, when Judge Twisden sat upon the crown-bench, and George Fox was brought to the bar. He had previously informed himself of the errors in the second indictment, which had been drawn up with great care. "Yet," he says, in his Journal, "many errors, and those great ones, were found in this indictment, as well as the former. Surely the hand of the Lord was in it, to confound their mischievous work against me, and to blind them therein, insomuch, that although after the indictment was drawn at the former assize, the judge examined it himself, and tried it with the clerks, yet

* Letters of Early Friends, XCIV.

the word "subject" was left out of this indictment also, the day of the month was put in wrong, and several material words of the oath were left out; yet they went on confidently against me, thinking all was safe and well. When I was set at the bar, and the jury called over to be sworn, the clerk asked me first, 'Whether I had any objection to make against any of the jury?' I told him, 'I knew none of them.' Then having sworn the jury, they swore three of the officers of the court to prove 'that the oath was tendered to me at the last assizes, according to the indictment.'"

JUDGE. "Come, come; it was not done in a corner. What have you to say to it? Did you take the oath at the last assizes?"

George Fox then repeated what he had formerly said, and pleaded as exactly as his memory would allow.

JUDGE. "I will not dispute with you but in point of law."

GEORGE FOX. "I have something to speak to the jury concerning the indictment."

JUDGE. "You must not speak to the jury; but if you have anything to say, you must speak to me."

GEORGE FOX. "Should the oath be tendered to the king's subjects only, or to the subjects of foreign princes?"

JUDGE. "To the subjects of this realm; for I will speak nothing to you but in point of law."

GEORGE FOX. "Look in the indictment and thou mayst see the word 'subject' is left out of this indictment also. Therefore, seeing the oath is not to be tendered to any but the subjects of this realm, and ye have not put me in as a subject, the court is to take no notice of this indictment."

JUDGE. "Take him away, jailer, take him away."

"So I was presently hurried away. The jailer and people looked when I should be called for again; but I was never brought into the court any more, though I had many other great errors to assign in the indictment. After I was gone, the judge asked the jury, 'If they were agreed?' They said 'Yes;' and found for the king against me, as I was told.

But I was never called to hear sentence given, nor was any given against me, that I could ever hear of. I understood when they looked narrowly into the indictment they saw it was not good; and the judge having sworn the officers of the court, that the oath was tendered to me the assize before, upon such a day, according as was set down in the indictment, and that being the wrong day; I should have proved the officers of the court forsworn men again, if the judge would have suffered me to plead to the indictment, which was thought to be the reason why they hurried me away so soon."

It appeared afterwards, that they had recorded him as being premunired, without the usual form of pronouncing sentence upon him in open court, by which means his enemies hoped to subject him to perpetual imprisonment. He had however, during this season of deep trial, an unfailing support in the consciousness of divine approbation, and the consoling evidence of heavenly love. Being drawn into near union and communion with God, he was favoured to witness, in the visions of light, a foresight of events which could only be known through divine revelation.

"While I was a prisoner," he says, "in Lancaster castle, there was great noise and talk of the Turk's overspreading Christendom, and great fears entered many. But one day as I was walking in my prison chamber, I saw the Lord's power turn against him, and that he was turning back again. I declared to some, what the Lord let me see, when there were such fears of his overturning Christendom; and within a month after, the news came down, wherein it was mentioned that they had given him a defeat. Another time, as I was walking in my chamber, with my eye to the Lord, I saw the angel of the Lord, with a glittering drawn sword stretched southward, as though the court had been all on fire. Not long after, the wars broke out with Holland, and the sickness broke forth, and afterwards the fire of London; so the Lord's sword was drawn indeed."

CHAPTER XIX.

Conventicle act—Sufferings and banishment of Friends—Plague in London—G. Whitehead and Gilbert Latey remain to nurse the sick—Sufferings at Reading—Letter of George Fox to the prisoners—Removal of George Fox to Scarborough castle—His sufferings there—His conversation with Papists—With Dr. Witty—With Dr. Craddock—His release.

1665-6.

While George Fox and Margaret Fell were immured in Lancaster castle, suffering under a sentence which declared them prisoners for life, their Friends in London and some other places, were subjected to hardships and privations scarcely less severe.

In addition to the act against Popish recusants, under which a number of Friends were premunired, many were subjected to protracted sufferings by two other acts of Parliament. The first of these, passed in 1661, declares that any person who shall maintain that the taking of an oath is unlawful, or who shall wilfully refuse to take an oath lawfully tendered, or if the said persons called Quakers shall assemble to the number of five or more, above sixteen years of age, under pretence of joining in a religious worship not authorized by the laws of the realm; any such person, convicted by a jury, shall, for the first offence, be fined not exceeding five pounds, or subjected to three months imprisonment; for the second offence, ten pounds or six months imprisonment; and for the third offence, they may be transported to the British dominions beyond the seas.*

The second, called the Conventicle Act, was passed in 1664, and was to continue three years. It related to conventicles or meetings for worship held in any other manner than is allowed by the liturgy of the church of England, and also to

* Sewel, I. 401.

a refusal to take an oath in courts of justice. The fines, imprisonment, and banishment it imposed, were similar to those named in the first act, with the additional severity that fines and imprisonment might be inflicted by the mayor of a city, or two justices of the peace, and that transportation and distraint of goods should be adjudged by the quarter sessions. It provided, moreover, that any person sentenced to transportation under this act, who should escape or return without leave from government, should be adjudged a felon and suffer death.*

This act was doubtless procured through the instigation of the Anglican clergy, and was intended to apply to all nonconformists. The Friends, however, by their open and unflinching fidelity in keeping up their meetings, had to bear the brunt of the persecution.

The first attempt made in England to transport them on account of their religious principles, was on the 24th of the first month, (March,) 1665, when Edward Brush, Robert Hays, and James Harding, were taken from Newgate and shipped at Gravesend.

But Robert Hays, who was already reduced by sickness, being removed from the prison on a cold day, and without sufficient food or clothing, died soon after he came on board.† The other two were taken to Jamaica, and after remaining some time, returned to their homes in England. Eight more Friends received sentence of transportation about the same time, and were soon after put on board the ship Ann, Thomas May, master, bound for Jamaica. But owing to a series of remarkable occurrences, deemed providential, the ship was prevented from going to sea. The Friends were set ashore and taken on board again no less than six times, until at length, after being baffled and delayed nearly two months, the captain declared he would have no more to do with the Quakers, and gave them a certificate, in which he says, "I perceive that the hand of the Lord is against me, that I dare not

* Sewel, II. † G. Whitehead's Christian Progress.

proceed on my voyage to carry them, they being innocent persons, and no crime signified against them worthy of banishment." * The Friends, being thus set at liberty, returned to their homes, and sent an account of the circumstances, together with a copy of the captain's certificate, to the king and council, by whom an order was passed soon after, directing the high sheriff to secure them again. Under this order they were committed to prison, and remained there seven years, until released by the king's proclamation.†

About the same period, three Friends, sentenced to transportation, were put on board the ship Mary Fortune, of Bristol, John Lloyd master, bound for Barbadoes. This ship being in like manner delayed five weeks, the captain put the Friends ashore, and gave a certificate, in which he uses this language, "But now going to depart, their cry, and the cry of their families and friends, are entered into the ears of the Lord God, and he hath smitten us even to the very heart, saying, 'Curséd be he that parteth man and wife;' and, moreover, they that oppress his people, his plagues shall follow them wheresoever they go; and assuredly we do, in part, partake of them already; for our consciences will in no wise let us rest, or be in quiet, for the Lord hath smitten us with a terrible fear, so that we can in no wise proceed to carry them." . .

Near the close of the year 1664, fifty-five Friends, of whom eighteen were women, were sentenced, by Judges Hyde and Twisden, to be transported to Jamaica, and were kept in Newgate prison, before and after sentence, about thirteen months. Several ship-masters were treated with, but refused to take them, saying they would rather lay up their ships.‡

At length they were put on board the ship Black Eagle, lying in the Thames. She remained in the river seven weeks, during which twenty-seven of the Friends died, and one more was missing, of whom no account could be given. She pro-

* Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, p. 369.

† Besse's Sufferings, I. 246.

‡ Memoir of William Crouch, Friends' Library, XI. 312.

ceeded to sea with the remaining twenty-seven, but was taken near the coast by a Dutch privateer, and the prisoners, after much rough treatment, were landed in Holland, whence all of them, except one, found their way back to England. The one who remained was John Claus, a German, who had been convinced of Friends' principles in England, and, after his banishment, settled in Amsterdam, where he continued steadfast in the truth, and subsequently acted as interpreter for George Fox.

Although many other Friends were sentenced to transportation, there appears to be no account of any having reached the places assigned for them, except the two first mentioned. One of these, Edward Brush, was a very aged man, of good repute, who left behind him a wife and child to bewail his banishment to a foreign land.

It was remarked that the first death from the plague in London, in 1665, was next door to the house that had been occupied by Edward Brush, and that it broke out soon after the transportation of the Friends was begun. Its ravages were dreadful. Eight thousand died in a single week, and yet, in the midst of that appalling calamity, so great was the cruelty and presumption of the persecutors, that they continued their inhuman proceedings, crowding their victims into loathsome jails where the pestilence was known to exist, or placing them on board ships where the danger of infection was scarcely less imminent.*

The pestilence continued to increase until the beginning of autumn, when a large proportion of the inhabitants had left the city. Trade was at an end, grass was growing in the thoroughfares of commerce, and no sound was heard in the streets save cries of distress from bereaved families, and the voices of "the searchers" appointed to bury the corpses, who, passing in their carts, called aloud to the inhabitants, "Bring out your dead." During the last summer month, sixteen

* G. Whitehead's Christian Progress, p. 300.

hundred died daily. The people were at first struck with consternation, but at length despair rendered them courageous. They then crowded to the places of public worship, regardless of danger from infection; for they looked upon themselves as already numbered for the grave.

"It was in the height of this despair," says an eye-witness, "that it pleased God to stay his hand, and to slacken the fury of the contagion in a manner as surprising as that of its beginning, and which demonstrated it to be his own particular hand, above the agency of means. Nothing but Omnipotent Power could have done it. The contagion despised all medicine: death raged in every corner, and had it gone on as it did then, a few weeks more would have cleared the town of its inhabitants. In that very moment when thirty thousand were dead in three weeks, nay, when it was reported three thousand died in one night, and an hundred thousand more were taken sick, when we might well say, 'Vain was the help of man,' it pleased God to cause the fury of it to abate, and by his immediate hand to disarm the enemy. It was wonderful! The physicians were surprised, wherever they visited, to find their patients better, and in a few days everybody was recovering." *

When the pestilence had arrived at its greatest height, the arm of persecution was in some measure paralysed; but hundreds of Friends were still in prison, though many had been released from their bonds by death. On such occasions, no class can expect to be exempted from the law of mortality. "There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked;" but those faithful sufferers for Christ's sake, far from regarding death as a calamity, were prepared to welcome the messenger who called them from the trials of time to the rewards of eternity.

George Whitehead and Gilbert Latey, who were able and devoted ministers of the gospel, remained in the city from a sense of duty, in order to minister to the sick and dying, and to assist in keeping up the meetings of Friends. Being under

* Friends' Library, I. 178.

the influence of that divine love which casts out fear, they visited the prisons, and other places infected with the plague, administering to the poor sufferers nourishment for the body, and comfort for the soul. Many other Friends remained in the city for the same benevolent purpose; and it was remarkable that in most cases, those who were engaged in this service from a sense of religious obligation, were wonderfully preserved.

In other parts of the kingdom besides the metropolis, the sufferings of Friends on account of their religious testimonies, were protracted and severe. In Reading, there were many in prison; and George Fox, though a prisoner himself at Lancaster, wrote them the following letter of encouragement.

To all the prisoners of the Lord, for the Truth and Christ's sake:

"Oh! be valiant for the Truth upon the earth, that you may triumph in glory, over the spirits of the world in the everlasting seed, that reigns and will reign, when that which makes to suffer is gone, before which it was. Therefore trust in the name of the Lord, which hath held and kept up your heads, over all the storms and proud waves and floods, and who hath been your Rock of Life. Therefore sit under the shadow of the Almighty, that doth shade you from all heats and storms: rejoicing in all your sufferings, that you may come forth as gold seven times in the fire: and do not look at time, nor think your sufferings long; but look at Him that hath all time in his hand. All to be heirs of Him and possess Him; and then have life eternal, and so to be God's lot. He to possess you and you Him, who is from everlasting to everlasting, blessed forever! His presence be with you all. Amen."

"So no more, but my love to you all in the life that changeth not. Remember my love to all, as though I named them.

GEORGE FOX."*

* Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, XCVII.

Among the prisoners at Reading were Thomas Curtis and his wife. He had been a justice of the peace, and they had lived in much affluence, but on joining Friends they were stripped of all. The following letter appears to be an answer to that of George Fox:

Reading, 15th of 11th month, 1664.
(1st month 1665.)

"Dear George: With true and unfeigned love do I heartily salute thee;—dear and precious is the remembrance of thee even to us all; and in our sufferings, a few lines from thee hath made our hearts right glad. . . . . We are twenty-five in all, yet left. This day our meeting was quiet, contrary to all our expectations.

"Our little children kept the meeting up when we were all in prison, notwithstanding that wicked justice (Armorer) when he came and found them there, with a staff that he had with a spear in it, would pull them out of the meeting and punch them in the back, till some of them have been black in the face: his fellow I believe is not to be found in England, as a justice of the peace. And now we are so close kept, that no man must speak with me, but in the hearing of the jailer:—yet the Lord supports us, and we are over all in true peace and unity. The bearer, my man, can give thee a large account of things. George Lamboll and his wife, and my Ann (his wife,) and Joseph, and Benjamin, are all prisoners with me:—their dear love is to thee, in the fellowship that is everlasting, and to Margaret Fell, and the rest of the prisoners in Lancaster castle, and so is mine.

Thomas Curtis."*

After George Fox was premunired, as related in the foregoing chapter, he remained at Lancaster about six weeks, when an order was sent down from the king, through the instigation of Colonel Kirby, and others, for his removal to another prison. When brought out for this purpose, he was

* Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, XCVI.

so weak from long confinement in the cold damp castle, that he could scarcely stand; but being lifted on a horse by the sheriff and his attendants, they conveyed him, with very little regard to his feelings, to the city of York, where he remained two days. He was then placed under the custody of a military escort, to whom he preached the gospel, which they received kindly, and treated him with civility. From York he was conveyed to Scarborough Castle, then under the command of Sir Jordan Crossland.

Here he was placed in a room so open to the weather, and so smoky, that he said to the governor, who was a Papist, "Thou hast placed me in thy purgatory." After having spent fifty shillings in repairing the apartment, he was removed into another still more uncomfortable, for it had no fire-place, and being very open on the side next to the sea, the rain was driven in by the wind. Having no fire to dry his clothing, he was benumbed with cold, and his fingers swelled to twice their usual size. He expended some money to repair this room also, but could not render it in any wise comfortable; and in addition to his other grievances, he was generally denied the company of his friends, and often deprived of the food sent for his sustenance. A three-penny loaf served him three weeks, and his drink was water, with a sprig of wormwood steeped in it. He told the keepers of the castle that their conduct towards him was worse than that of the heathen to Paul; for when the apostle was prisoner at Rome, he was permitted to see his friends, and to preach in his own hired house to all who would come to him.

Although denied the company of his friends, he was allowed to be visited by others, who, from motives of curiosity, or the love of disputation, were attracted to the prison. A large company of Papists having once come to see him, one of them said, "the Pope was infallible, and had stood infallible ever since Peter's time." George Fox showed him the contrary, from history: "For Marcellinus, one of the bishops of Rome, denied the faith and sacrificed to idols; therefore he was not

infallible. And moreover, if they were in the infallible spirit, they need not have jails, swords, staves, racks, tortures, fines, whips, and gallows, to hold up their religion by, and to destroy men's lives about religion; for if they were in the infallible spirit, they would preserve men's lives, and use none but spiritual weapons about religion." He then related to them what had been told him by one who had been a member of their society. A woman who lived in Kent had been a zealous Papist; but being convinced of Friends' principles, she exhorted other Papists to embrace the same. One of them, a tailor, being at work at her house, she endeavoured to show him the errors of his religion; but he drew his knife, and got between her and the door, with the intention of stabbing her. She bade him "put up his knife, for she knew his principle."

Her coolness and intrepidity enabled her to frustrate his design, but she assured George Fox "it was the principle of the Papists, if any turned from their religion, to kill them if they could."

Another Papist who came to converse with him said, "All the patriarchs were in hell till Christ came, and that when Christ suffered, he was three days and nights in hell, to bring them out." George told him that was false, for Christ said to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." "And Enoch and Elijah were translated into Heaven, and Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount, before he suffered."

He was also visited by Doctor Witty, a zealous Presbyterian, and noted physician, who was accompanied by Lord Falconbridge and several knights. The doctor undertook to discourse with George Fox, and asked him, "What he was in prison for?"

George Fox. "Because I would not disobey the command of Christ, and swear."

Doctor W. "You ought to swear your allegiance to the king."

George Fox. "Didst thou not swear against the king and

House of Lords, and take the covenant; and hast thou not since sworn for the king? What is thy swearing good for? As for me, my allegiance does not consist in swearing, but in truth and faithfulness."

The doctor and his company then withdrew, but he afterwards boasted among his patients, that he had conquered George Fox in controversy. This being repeated to George, he said to the governor, "It was a small boast in the doctor to say he had conquered a bondman," adding, "I desire him to come again." He accordingly came again, accompanied by sixteen or seventeen persons of rank, and then, in conversation, he affirmed "That Christ had not enlightened every man that cometh into the world; that the grace of God, that brought salvation, had not appeared unto all men, and that Christ had not died for all men."

GEORGE FOX. "What sort of men are those whom Christ hath not enlightened, whom his grace has not appeared to, and whom he has not died for?"

DOCTOR WITTY. "Christ did not die for adulterers, idolaters, and wicked men."

GEORGE FOX. "Are not adulterers and wicked men sinners?"

DOCTOR WITTY. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Did not Christ die for sinners? Did he not come to call sinners to repentance?"

DOCTOR WITTY. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Then thou hast stopped thy own mouth."

Several of those present confessed it was true, and the doctor, being disconcerted, withdrew, and came no more.

Another time the governor brought a priest, but he was soon silenced. Not long after, he brought two or three members of Parliament, who asked George "Whether he owned ministers or bishops?" He replied, "Yes, such as Christ sends; such as have freely received, and will freely give; such as are qualified, and are in the same power and spirit the apostles were in. But such bishops and teachers as yours,

that will go no further than a great benefice, I do not own, for they are not like the apostles. Christ saith to his ministers, 'Go ye into all nations, and preach the gospel;' but ye parliament-men, who keep your priests and bishops in such great fat benefices, have spoiled them all. For do ye think they will go into all nations to preach, or that they will go any further than a great fat benefice? Judge yourselves whether they will or not?"

Another of his visiters was the widow of Lord Fairfax, and with her came a large company, one of whom was a priest. "I was moved," says George Fox, "to declare the truth to them, and the priest asked me, 'Why we said Thou and Thee to people? for he counted us but fools and idiots for speaking so.' I asked him 'Whether those that translated the scriptures, and made the grammar and accidence, were fools and idiots; seeing they translated the scriptures so, and made the grammar so, Thou to one, and You to more than one, and left it so to us? If they were fools and idiots, why had not he, and such as he, who looked upon themselves as wise men, and could not bear Thou and Thee to a single person, altered the grammar, accidence, and Bible, and put the plural instead of the singular?'" Many of the company acknowledged the truth of his views, and would have given him money, but he refused it.

He was afterwards visited by Doctor Craddock, an Episcopal priest, whom George, in the early part of his religious career, had called on for advice, and found to be a "miserable comforter."

Accompanied by three other clergymen, he now came to the prison, and the following dialogue ensued:

Doctor C. "What are you in prison for?"

George Fox. "For obeying the command of Christ and the apostle, in not swearing. But if thou, being both a doctor and a justice, canst convince me that, after Christ and the apostle had forbidden swearing, they commanded christians to

swear, then I will swear. Here is a bible, if thou canst show me any such command."

DOCTOR. "It is written, 'Ye shall swear in truth and righteousness.'"

GEORGE FOX. "Ay, it was written so in Jeremiah's time, but that was many ages before Christ commanded not to swear at all; but where is it written so since Christ forbade all swearing? I could bring as many instances out of the Old Testament for swearing as thou canst, and it may be more; but of what force are they to prove swearing lawful in the New Testament, since Christ and the apostle forbade it? Besides, in that text where it is written, 'Ye shall swear,' &c., what *ye* was this? Was it ye Gentiles, or ye Jews?"

ONE OF THE COMPANY. "It was to the Jews that this was spoken." To which the Doctor assented.

GEORGE FOX. "Very well; but where did God ever command the Gentiles to swear? for thou knowest we are Gentiles by nature."

DOCTOR. "Indeed, in the gospel times, everything was established out of the mouth of two or three witnesses; but there was to be no swearing then."

GEORGE FOX. "Why, then, dost thou force oaths upon Christians, contrary to thy own knowledge in the gospel times? And why dost thou excommunicate my friends? (for he had excommunicated abundance, both in Yorkshire and Lancashire.")

DOCTOR. "For not coming to church."

GEORGE FOX. "Why! ye left us about twenty years ago, when we were but young lads and lasses, to the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, many of whom made spoil of our goods, and persecuted us, because we would not follow them. We, being but young, knew little then of your principles, and if ye had intended to keep the old men, that did know them, to yourselves, and to have kept your principles alive, that we might have known them, ye should either not have fled from us, as ye did, or you should have sent us your epistles, collects,

homilies, and evening songs; for Paul wrote epistles to the saints, though he was in prison. But they and we might have turned Turks or Jews for any collects, homilies, or epistles we had from you all this while. And now thou hast excommunicated us, both young and old, and so have others of ye done; that is, ye have put us out of your church, before ye have got us into it; and before ye have brought us to know your principles. Is this not madness in you, to put us out before we were brought in? Indeed, if ye had brought us into your church, and when we had been in, if we had done some bad thing, that had been something like a ground for excommunication, or putting out again. But what dost thou call the church?"

DOCTOR. "Why, that which you call the steeple-house."

GEORGE FOX. "Did Christ shed his blood for the steeple-house? Did he purchase and sanctify the steeple-house, with his blood? And seeing the church is Christ's bride and wife, and that he is the head of the church, dost thou think the steeple-house is Christ's wife and bride, and that he is the head of that old house, or of his people?"

DOCTOR. "No; Christ is the head of the people, and they are the church."

GEORGE FOX. "But ye have given the title of church to an old house, which properly belongs to the people, and ye have taught them to believe so. Why do ye persecute Friends for not paying tithes? Did God ever command the Gentiles to pay tithes? Did not Christ end tithes when he ended the Levitical priesthood that took tithes? Christ, when he sent his disciples to preach, did he not command them to preach freely, as he had given them freely? And are not all the ministers of Christ, bound to observe this command of Christ?"

DOCTOR. "I will not dispute that." Finding himself pushed upon this point, he quickly turned to another subject, and said, "You marry, but I know not how."

George Fox. "It may be so, but why dost thou not come and see."

The doctor then threatened, that he would use his power and influence against the Quakers, the same as he had ever done.

George Fox. "Take heed, for thou art an old man. Where readest thou from Genesis to Revelation, that ever any priest did marry people? Show us some instances thereof, if thou would have us come to thee to be married. Thou hast excommunicated one of my friends, two years after he was dead, about his marriage; and why dost thou not excommunicate Isaac, and Jacob, and Boaz and Ruth? For we do not read that they were ever married by priests: but took one another in the assemblies of the righteous, in the presence of God and his people; and so do we. So that we have all the holy men and women, that scripture speaks of in this practice, on our side."

The doctor finding he could not maintain his ground, withdrew with his company. "With such people," says George Fox, "I had much discourse while I was there; for most that came to the castle would desire to speak to me, and great disputes I had with them. But as to my friends, I was as a man buried alive, for though many came to see me, few were suffered to come at me; and when any Friend came into the castle about business, if he looked but towards me, they would rage at him."

When we consider the peaceable principles, and inoffensive demeanour of George Fox, it seems surprising that such severity should have been exercised towards him, with the approbation of men who stood high in authority. But there is reason to believe that Colonel Kirby and others of his enemies, had grossly calumniated him to the king and council, and hence the orders sent down from London to keep him a close prisoner. It was a time when plots and insurrections were dreaded by the government, and seeing that great crowds of non-conformists everywhere attended on his ministry, they

imagined that his influence might be exerted for political purposes, and to the detriment of the crown.

"The officers," he says, "threatened that I should be hanged over the wall. Nay, the deputy-governor told me once that the king, knowing that I had great interest in the people, had sent me thither, that if there should be any stirring in the nation, they should hang me over the wall to keep the people down."

There being much talk of a design to hang him, he told them, "If that was what they desired, and it was permitted them, he was ready, for he never feared death nor sufferings in his life; but he was known to be an innocent, peaceable man, free from all plottings, and one that sought the good of all men."

The governor, who at first had treated him harshly through prejudice, became on further acquaintance interested in his favour; and being on the eve of leaving for London, George Fox desired him to speak to Esquire Marsh, Sir Francis Cobb, and others, and to inform them how long he had been in prison. On his return, he reported that Esquire Marsh said, "He would go an hundred miles barefoot for the liberty of George Fox," and that several others had spoken well of him. At length, a statement of his imprisonment and sufferings being drawn up by two of his friends, John Whitehead and Ellis Hookes, it was carried by Esquire Marsh to the master of requests, who procured an order from the king for his release. John Whitehead hastened with it to Scarborough Castle; and the governor, without requiring bond or sureties for his peaceable living, promptly set him at liberty, and gave him the following passport:

"Permit the bearer hereof, George Fox, late a prisoner here, and now discharged by his majesty's order, quietly to pass about his lawful occasions, without any molestation. Given under my hand at Scarborough Castle, this first day of September, 1666.

JORDAN CROSSLANDS,
Governor of Scarborough Castle."

The governor would receive no compensation for the civility and kindness he had lately shown him; but said, "Whatever good he could do to him and his friends, he would do it, and would never do them any hurt." And afterwards, when at any time the mayor of the town sent for soldiers to break up Friends' meetings, if he sent any, he would give them a positive charge "not to meddle." He continued through life to be kind and affectionate to Friends. The officers and soldiers of the castle likewise manifested their good will towards George Fox, saying, when they spoke of him, "He is as stiff as a tree, and as pure as a bell, for we could never bow him."

CHAPTER XX.

Great Fire in London—Thomas Ibbitt's prophecy—Travels of George Fox—He reproves the followers of J. Perrot—Recommends meetings for discipline throughout the Society—Meetings of Dissenters prohibited by proclamation—Conduct of Presbyterian clergy—George Fox visits Esquire Marsh—Conversation with a Papist—Visits Scarborough—Travels in Ireland—Returns to England—His marriage with Margaret Fell.

1666-9.

Soon after leaving Scarborough Castle, George Fox was informed of the great fire in London, which took place the next day after his release. By this awful conflagration, four hundred streets were strewed with ruins, and thirteen thousand houses reduced to ashes.* The inhabitants, struck with dismay, and powerless to arrest the flames, were driven from street to street; and abandoning most of their goods, they were glad to escape with their lives.

George Fox, while imprisoned at Lancaster, had received an evidence, as already related, that a great calamity was impending over the southern part of the kingdom; but a still

* Hume's Hist. England.

more remarkable vision was witnessed by Thomas Ibbitt, whose prophecy is well attested and recorded by several contemporary writers.* This Friend, who lived in Huntingdonshire, came to London a few days before the fire, and alighting from his horse, with his clothes thrown loosely around him like one dressed in haste, he went up and down the streets for two days, pronouncing a judgment by fire, which should lay waste the city. On the evening after he had been thus engaged, some of the Friends, apprehensive that he might be under a delusion, obtained an interview with him, when he related to them that, some time before, he had had a vision of the fire, but had delayed to come and declare it as commanded; until, as he expressed it, "the fire was felt in his own bosom."

On the event taking place in exact accordance with his prediction, it appears that he lost the proper balance of his mind, or was affected with some degree of spiritual pride; for the fire having reached the east end of Cheapside, he stood before the flames with outstretched arms, as if to stay their progress. Some of his friends, apprehensive that he would be consumed, snatched him away, and thus his life was preserved. He afterwards came to see and acknowledge his presumption, and his case affords an instructive warning to those who are employed as messengers of the Most High, that they have no less need than others to walk in humility, and to wait for the pointings of Divine Truth.

George Fox, being now at liberty, resumed his labours in the gospel ministry. He had a meeting at Scarborough, which was attended by several persons of rank, one of whom, "called a lady," objected that he spoke against the ministers. He said to her in reply, "Such as the prophets and Christ declared against formerly, I declare against now." After holding several other meetings, he says: "Next day, two Friends being to take each other in marriage, there was a very great meeting, which I attended. I was moved to open

* G. Whitehead, 31–7. Sewel, II. 141. G. Fox, II. 75.

the state of our marriages, declaring 'How the people of God took one another in the assemblies of the elders; and that it was God who joined man and woman together before the fall. And though men had taken upon them to join in the fall, yet in the restoration it is God's joining that is the right and honourable marriage; but never any priest did marry any, that we read of in the scriptures, from Genesis to Revelations.' Then I showed them the duty of man and wife, how they should serve God, being heirs of life and grace together."

Continuing his travels, he visited Friends on his route, till he came to York, in which city he had a large meeting, and from thence he passed on to Snyder-hill-green, where there was a General Meeting of Friends. The priest of the place hearing of it, sent the constables to obtain a warrant for the apprehension of Friends; but, although they rode so hard as almost to spoil their horses, yet having but a short notice, and far to go, they did not return till the meeting was ended. On his way from the meeting, George Fox met the constables, the wardens, and the justice's clerk, who, not knowing him, suffered him to pass, and thus he escaped. "For," he says, "the Lord frustrated their design, blessed be his name forever."

After passing through many counties, holding large and precious meetings, and visiting his relatives in Leicestershire, he came to London. "I was so weak," he says, "with lying, almost three years, in cruel and hard imprisonments, my joints and my body were so stiff and benumbed, that I could hardly get upon my horse, nor bend my joints, nor well bear to be near the fire, nor to eat warm meat, I had been so long kept from it. Being come to London, I walked a little among the ruins, and took good notice of them. I saw the city lying, according as the word of the Lord came to me concerning it several years before."

Having attended the meetings of Friends in the metropolis, he went into the country again, visiting meetings, until he came to Bristol, where, during the fair, he had much religious

service, and then returned to London, in the latter part of the year 1666.

"About this time," he writes, in his Journal, "some who had run out from truth, and clashed against Friends, were reached unto by the power of the Lord, which came wonderfully over and made them 'condemn and tear their papers of controversy in pieces.' Several meetings we had with them, the Lord's everlasting power was over all, and set judgment on the head of that which had run out. In these meetings, which lasted whole days, several who had gone out with John Perrot and others, came in again, and condemed that spirit which had led them to 'keep on their hats when Friends prayed, and when themselves prayed.'* Some of them said, 'Friends were more righteous than they;' and that 'If Friends had not stood, they had been gone, and had fallen into perdition.' Thus the Lord's power was wonderfully manifested, and came over all."

During this year, he was called, by a sense of religious duty, to aid the Society in the institution of meetings for discipline. He recommended the establishment of five monthly meetings, for men and women, in the city of London, and after they were well settled, he travelled into other parts of the nation, and wrote to Friends beyond sea, in order to promote the same object. A more particular account of these meetings, and of his services in their institution, will be found in the Dissertation on Christian Discipline, at the end of this volume.

It is worthy of note that the principles of church government, established among Friends, and most of the provisions in their code of discipline, were adopted at the suggestion of George Fox, and although every Yearly Meeting is at liberty to repeal them, so far as its own members are concerned, yet they have remained in force nearly two hundred years,

* For a further account of John Perrot, see Janney's Life of W. Penn, Chap. VI.; Sewel's History of the Quakers, and T. Ellwood's Life; also, Epistle CCXIV of George Fox, in 7th volume of his Works.

affording a strong evidence that they were founded in wisdom.

In the year 1667, there was a proclamation issued against the meetings of Dissenters, and as George Fox came through Herefordshire, he was told of a great meeting of Presbyterians, who had engaged to stand, and give up all, rather than forsake their meetings. Notwithstanding the proclamation, the people attended, but they found their preacher had abandoned his post and fled.

Among the Presbyterian ministers in London, was one named Pocock, who had been much opposed to Friends, and used to call them house-creepers. He married Abigail Darcy a person of rank, and she being convinced of Friends' principles, George Fox went to see them. She said to him in the presence of her husband, "I have something to speak to thee against my husband." "Nay," said George, "thou must not speak against thy husband." "Yes," said she, "but I must in this case. The last First-day, he, his priests and people, the Presbyterians, met; they had candles, tobacco-pipes, bread, cheese and cold meat on the table; and they agreed beforehand, if the officers should come in upon them, they would leave their preaching and praying, and fall to their cold meat."

George Fox, (turning to her husband.) "Is not this a shame to you who imprisoned us, and spoiled our goods, because we would not join you in your religion, and called us house-creepers, that ye do not stand to your own religion yourselves? Did ye ever find our meetings stuffed with bread and cheese and tobacco-pipes? Or did ye ever read in the scriptures of any such practice among the saints?"

Pocock. "Why, we must be as wise as serpents."

George Fox. "This is the serpent's wisdom indeed. But who would have thought that you Presbyterians, and Independents, who persecuted and imprisoned others, spoiled their goods, and whipped such as would not follow your religion, should now flinch yourselves, and not dare to stand to

your own religion, but cover it with tobacco-pipes, flagons of drink, cold meat, and bread and cheese!" "But this, and such like deceitful practices," he adds, "were too common amongst them in times of persecution."

While in London, he exhorted Friends to have all marriages among them proposed in their meetings for discipline, that care might be taken to have them accomplished in an orderly manner with consent of parents, and that widows marrying again should have the rights of their children by a former husband properly secured. His attention was, about the same time, directed to the subject of educating the children of Friends, in a manner consistent with their religious profession, and in those branches of learning which are most useful. For this purpose, he recommended the establishment of a school for boys at Waltham, and one for girls at Shackelwell.

During the year 1667 and '68, he was assiduously engaged in the gospel ministry, traversing almost every part of England and Wales, and aiding in the establishment of meetings for discipline. The result of his labours was most salutary and encouraging; and he writes in his Journal, "Since these meetings have been settled, many mouths have been opened in thanksgiving and praise, and many have blessed the Lord that he sent me forth in that service; yea, with tears have many praised him. For coming to have a concern and care for God's honour and glory, that his name be not blasphemed, which they profess, and to see that all who profess the truth, walk in the truth, in righteousness and holiness, which becomes the house of God, and that all order their conversation aright that they may see the salvation of God; all having this care upon them for God's glory, and being exercised in his holy power and spirit, in the order of the heavenly life and gospel of Jesus, they may all see and know, possess and partake of the government of Christ, of the increase of which there is to be no end. Thus the Lord's everlasting renown and praise is set up in every one's heart that is faithful; so that we can say, the gospel order established amongst us is not of

man nor by man, but of and by Jesus Christ, in and through the Holy Ghost."

Having returned to London in 1668, he spent some time there visiting meetings. While in the city he called to see his friend Marsh, who had kindly assisted in obtaining his release from Scarborough Castle. It happened to be at the hour of dinner, and he was kindly invited to dine with them, but not feeling freedom to do so, he courteously declined, as was his usual practice, when such attentions were offered him by the great. Several persons of rank were at dinner with Esquire Marsh, and he said to one of them, who was a Papist: "Here is a Quaker you have not seen before."

PAPIST. "Do you own the christening of children?"

GEORGE FOX. "There is no scripture for any such practice."

PAPIST. "What! not for christening children?"

GEORGE FOX. "Nay. The one baptism by the one spirit into one body we own; but to throw a little water on a child's face, and say, that is baptizing and christening it, there is no scripture for that."

PAPIST. "Do you own the catholic faith?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes; but neither the Pope nor the papists are in the catholic faith; for the true faith works by love, and purifies the heart; and if they were in that faith which gives victory, by which they might have access to God, they would not tell the people of a purgatory after they were dead." . . . . . "For the true, precious, divine faith, of which Christ is the author, gives victory over the devil, and sin, that separated man and woman from God. And if the papists were in the true faith, they would never use racks, prisons, and fines, to persecute and force others to their religion, who were not of their faith. This was not the practice of the apostles and primitive christians, who witnessed and enjoyed the true faith of Christ; but it was the practice of the faithless Jews and heathens to do so. But, seeing thou art a great leading man amongst the papists, and hast been

taught and bred up under the Pope, and seeing thou sayest, 'There is no salvation but in your church,' I desire to know of thee, what it is that doth bring salvation in your church."

PAPIST. "A good life."

GEORGE FOX. "And nothing else?"

PAPIST. "Yes; good works."

GEORGE FOX. "Is this your doctrine and principle?"

PAPIST. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Then, neither thou, nor the Pope, nor any of the papists, know what it is that brings salvation."

PAPIST. "What brings salvation in your church?"

GEORGE FOX. "That which brought salvation to the church in the apostles' days, the same which brings salvation to us, and nothing else; namely, 'the grace of God,' which the scripture says, 'brings salvation, and hath appeared to all men,' which taught the saints then, and teaches us now. This grace, which brings salvation, teaches 'to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live godly, righteously, and soberly.' So it is not the good works, nor the good life, that brings salvation, but the grace."

PAPIST. "What! does this grace that bringeth salvation, appear unto all men?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes."

PAPIST. "I deny that."

GEORGE FOX. "All that deny that are sect-makers, and are not in the universal faith, grace, and truth, which the apostles were in." Then he spoke to me about the mother-church. I told him, "The several sects in Christendom had accused us, and said, 'We forsook our mother-church.' The papists charged us with forsaking their church, saying, 'Rome was the only mother-church.' The Episcopalians taxed us with forsaking the old Protestant religion, alleging, 'Theirs was the reformed mother-church.' . . . . . But I said, 'If we could own any outward place to be the mother-church, we should own Jerusalem, where the gospel was first preached by Christ himself and the apostles, where Christ suffered, where

the great conversion to christianity by Peter was, where were the types, figures, and shadows, which Christ ended, and where Christ commanded his disciples to wait until they were endued with power from on high. If any outward place deserved to be called the mother, that was the place where the first great conversion to christianity was. But the apostle saith, Gal. iv. 25, 26, 'Jerusalem which now is, is in bondage with her children; but Jerusalem which is above, is free,' which is the mother of us all. For it is written, 'Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she that hath an husband,' ver. 27. The apostle doth not say outward Jerusalem was the mother, though the first and great conversion to christianity was there; and there is less reason for the title mother to be given to Rome, or to any other outward place or city, by the children of Jerusalem that is above and free; neither are they Jerusalem's children that is above and free, who give the title of mother either to outward Jerusalem, to Rome, or to any other place or sect of people. And though this title (mother) hath been given to places and sects by the degenerate christians, yet we say still, as the apostle said of old, 'Jerusalem that is above is the mother of us all.' We can own no other, neither outward Jerusalem, nor Rome, nor any sect of people, for our mother, but Jerusalem which is above; which is free, the mother of all that are born again, become true believers in the light, and are grafted into Christ, the heavenly vine. For all who are born again of the immortal seed, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever, feed upon the milk of the word, the breast of life, grow by it in life; and cannot acknowledge any other to be their mother, but Jerusalem which is above.' 'Oh!' said Squire Marsh to the Papist, 'you do not know this man. If he would but come to church now and then, he would be a brave man.'

"After some other discourse, I went aside with Justice Marsh to another room, to speak with him concerning Friends;

for he was a justice of peace for Middlesex, and being a courtier, the other justices put much of the management of affairs upon him. He told me 'he was in a strait how to act between us and some other dissenters. For,' said he, 'you cannot swear; and the Independents, Baptists, and Fifth-monarchy people say also, 'They cannot swear;' therefore,' said he, 'how shall I distinguish betwixt you and them, seeing they and you all say, 'It is for conscience' sake that you cannot swear?' I answered, 'I will show thee how to distinguish. They, or most of them thou speakest of, can and do swear in some cases, but we cannot swear in any case. If a man should steal their cows and horses, and thou shouldst ask them whether they would swear they were theirs, many of them would readily do it; but if thou try our friends, they cannot swear for their own goods. Therefore, when thou puttest the oath of allegiance to any of them, ask them 'Whether they can swear in any other case, as for their cow or horse?' Which, if they be really of us, they cannot do, though they can bear witness to the truth.' I gave him a relation of a trial in Berkshire, which was thus: A thief stole two beasts from a friend of ours. The thief was taken, and cast into prison, and the Friend appeared against him at the assizes. But somebody having informed the judge that the prosecutor was a Quaker, and could not swear, the judge, before he heard the Friend, said, 'Is he a Quaker? And will he not swear? Then tender him the oath of allegiance and supremacy.' So he cast the Friend into prison, and premunired him, and set the thief at liberty.' Justice Marsh said, 'That judge was a wicked man.' 'But,' said I, 'if we could swear in any case, we would take the oath of allegiance to the king, who is to preserve the laws that are to support every man in his estate. Whereas others, that can swear in some cases, to preserve a part of their estates, if they be robbed, will not take this oath to the king, who is to preserve them in their whole estates, and bodies also. So that thou mayest easily distinguish and put a difference betwixt us and those people.' Justice Marsh

was afterwards very serviceable to Friends, in this and other cases; for he kept several, both Friends and others, from being premunired: and when Friends were brought before him, in time of persecution, he set many of them at liberty. When he could not avoid sending to prison, he sent some for a few hours, or a night. At length he went to the king, and told him 'He had sent some of us to prison, contrary to his conscience, and he could not do so any more.' Therefore he removed his family from Limehouse, where he lived, and took lodgings near James's Park. He told the king, 'If he would be pleased to give liberty of conscience, that would quiet and settle all; for then none could have any pretence to be uneasy.' And indeed he was a very serviceable man to truth and Friends in his day."

In the year 1669, George Fox writes in his Journal, "We had great service in London this year; the Lord's truth came over all. Many who had gone out from Truth came in again this year, confessing and condemning their outgoings." The following letter relates to the same subject:

JOHN ROUSE TO HIS SISTER-IN-LAW, SARAH FELL.

Newington, 15th of 11th month, 1668,
(First month, 1669.)

DEAR SISTER:—We have had several precious meetings since the General Meeting for the gathering of those that are gone astray, in which the power and glory so irresistibly broke in upon them, that many of them were very much broken, and gave open testimonies against that spirit which had seduced them from the unity of Friends, very much to the satisfaction of the faithful: and the power wrought so effectually among them, that Friends had little need to set forth the evil of the course they had followed; for they themselves gave sufficient testimony of the evil thereof; and the bowels of Friends were so enlarged towards them, that I believe there will be meetings appointed for the gathering of them so long as any that

are honest among them are left ungathered. Thy dearly loving brother, J. Rouse." *

Leaving London, George Fox visited meetings in Surrey and Sussex, and returning thence, he passed through the midland and northern counties to York Quarterly Meeting. Friends had, in Yorkshire, seven monthly meetings, which had proved to be so serviceable, that, at their request, seven more were established, for their principles were widely spread in that county.

Pursuing his journey, he came to Scarborough, and Sir Jordan Croslands, the governor of the castle where he had been so long a prisoner, sent him an invitation to his house, saying, "He hoped he would not be so unkind as not to visit him and his wife." After attending meeting there, he went to the governor's, and was received with courtesy and kindness. Coming into the neighbourhood of Col. Kirby, he understood that his old persecutor was still making threats against him, and had offered a reward of forty pounds for his arrest, but through divine mercy he was preserved out of his hands.

In this year he was led by a sense of duty to pay a religious visit to Ireland, and, being accompanied by Robert Lodge, James Lancaster, Thomas Briggs, and John Stubbs, he embarked at Liverpool. The master of the ship and many of the passengers were kindly disposed, and being at sea on a First-day, George Fox was moved to address them on the momentous truths of religion, upon which the captain said to the passengers, "Come, here are things that you never heard in your lives."

At Dublin, the Friends received him and his companions with joy, and after attending a meeting in the city, they proceeded to the Province meeting, which continued two days, and was eminently favoured with the evidence of Divine life and love. Passing on from thence, they came to another town, and held a meeting, after which some Papists mani-

* Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, LXII.

fested great hostility towards Friends, whereupon George Fox sent a challenge to their priests, to come forth and "try their God and their Christ which they made of bread and wine." No answer being received, he remarked that "They were worse than the priests of Baal; for Baal's priests tried their wooden god, but these durst not try their god of bread and wine; and Baal's priests and people did not eat their god, as these did, and then make another." At many places on his route, spies were set to watch his steps, and to give information of his meetings. At Cork especially, he was exposed to much peril, for the mayor, who had already imprisoned many Friends, issued four warrants for his apprehension, and he was advised not to enter the city; but, feeling assured of Divine protection, he rode through the market-place, and passed the mayor's door without molestation.

After alluding to the many dangers that attended him, he says, in his Journal, "Yet the Lord disappointed all their counsels, defeated all their designs against me, and by his good hand of providence, preserved me out of all their snares, and gave us many sweet and blessed opportunities to visit Friends, and spread truth through that nation. For meetings were very large, Friends coming to them far and near; and other people flocking in. The powerful presence of the Lord was preciously felt with and amongst us; whereby many of the world were reached, convinced, gathered to the truth, and the Lord's flock was increased; and Friends were greatly refreshed and comforted in feeling the love of God. Oh! the brokenness that was amongst them in the flowing of life! So that, in the power and spirit of the Lord, many together broke out into singing, even with audible voices, making melody in their hearts."

While at James Hutchinson's, in Ireland, many persons came to discourse with him concerning the doctrine of election and reprobation. He explained it to them in a satisfactory manner, showing that "The election stands in Christ," and

pertains to those who are united to him by being born again of his spirit.*

On his return from Ireland, he landed at Liverpool, and passing through Lancashire, he "had many precious meetings," and proceeded to Bristol, where he met with Margaret Fell, then on a visit to one of her daughters.

It had now been about a year since she was, by the king's order, liberated from Lancaster castle, where she had suffered four years imprisonment, under sentence of premunire. She and George Fox had long been intimately acquainted, and it had been a considerable time since he had informed her that he believed it would be right for them to take each other in marriage, to which she assented; but, in their apprehension, the proper time was not then come. "Wherefore," he says, "I let the thing rest, and went on in the work and service of the Lord, according as he led me; travelling in this nation, and through Ireland. But now being at Bristol, and finding Margaret Fell there, it opened in me from the Lord that the thing should be accomplished. After we had discoursed the matter together, I told her, 'If she also was satisfied with the accomplishing of it now, she should first send for her children;' which she did. When the rest of her daughters were come, I asked both them and her sons-in-law, if they had anything against it, or for it? and they all severally expressed their satisfaction therewith. Then I asked Margaret, 'If she had fulfilled her husband's will to her children?' She replied, 'The children knew she had.' Whereupon I asked them, 'Whether, if their mother married, they should not lose by it?' I asked Margaret, 'Whether she had done anything in lieu of it, which might answer it to the children?' The children said, 'She had answered it to them,' and desired me to speak no more of it. I told them 'I was plain, and would have all things done plainly: for I sought not any outward

* See Dissertation on Doctrines—section, Original and present state of man.

advantage to myself.' So our intention of marriage was laid before Friends, both privately and publicly, to their full satisfaction, many of whom gave testimony that it was of God. Afterwards, a meeting being appointed on purpose for the accomplishing thereof, in the public meeting-house at Broad-Mead, in Bristol, we took each other in marriage, the Lord joining us together in the honourable marriage, in the everlasting covenant and immortal seed of life. In the sense whereof, living and weighty testimonies were borne thereunto by Friends in the movings of the heavenly power, which united us together."*

At the time of their marriage, George Fox was 45 years of age, and his wife 55, she having been a widow 11 years.

"We staid," he says, "about a week in Bristol, and then went together to Oldstone: where, taking leave of each other in the Lord, we parted, betaking ourselves each to our several service; Margaret returning homewards to the north, and I passing on in the work of the Lord as before. I travelled through Wiltshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and so to London, visiting Friends: in all which counties I had many large and precious meetings."

* The marriage certificate, being a document of some interest, is here subjoined: —

"THESE ARE TO SIGNIFY unto all whom this may concern, that on the eighteenth day of the eighth month, in the year one thousand six hundred sixty-nine, George Fox and Margarett ffell, propounded their intentions of joininge together in the honourable marriage, in the covenant of God, in Men's meetinge, at Broad-mead, within the citty of Bristoll, (having before made mention of such their intentions to several ffriends,) on the behalf of which there were several testimonies given, both by the children and relations of the said Margarett, then present, and several others, in the power of the Lord, both of Men and Women, declaring their satisfaction and approbation of their declared intention of marriage.

And likewise at another meetinge both of Men and Women, at the place aforesaide, on the twenty-first day of the month and year aforesaide, the said George Fox and Margarett ffell, did againe publish their intention of joininge together in the honourable marriage in the covenant of God, unto which, there were againe many living testimonies borne by the relations and ffriends then present, both of Men and Women. And the same intentions

CHAPTER XXI.

George Fox on the Education of Orphans—M. Fox imprisoned—Letter of George Fox to her—Renewal of Conventicle Act—Sufferings of Friends — George Fox's Visit to the Prisoners — His Travels — His Sufferings in Spirit—His View of the New Jerusalem—His Prayers —His Wife, being released, comes to London—George Fox and others embark for Barbadoes—Chased by a Pirate—Remarkably preserved — Meeting in Barbadoes—Rules of Discipline—Advice to Slaveholders—Letter to Governor of Barbadoes—Visit to Jamaica—Death of Elizabeth Hooten—Voyage of George Fox to Maryland.

1669–72.

NEAR the close of the year 1669, George Fox, while in London, issued an address to Friends throughout the nation; advising that in all their quarterly and monthly meetings,

---

of Marriage beinge againe published by Dennis Hollister, at our public Meetinge-place aforesaide, on the two and twentyeth day of the month and year aforesaide, and then againe, a public testimony was given to the same, that it was of God who had brought it to a passe.

And for the full accomplishment of the aforesaid proposal, and approved intention, at a publicke meetinge, both of men and women ffriends appointed on purpose for the same thinge, at the place aforesaide, and on the twenty-seventh day of the month and year aforesaide, according to the law and ordinance of God, and the example and good order of His people, mentioned in the Scriptures of Truth, who tooke each other before witnesses, and the Elders of the people, as Laban appointed a meetinge, at the marriage of Jacob, and as a meetinge was appointed on purpose when Boaz and Ruth tooke each other, and also so it was in Canaan, when Christ and his disciples went to a marriage, &c. The saide George Fox did solemnly, in the presence of God, and us his people, declare, that he tooke the saide Margarett ffell in the everlasting power and covenant of God which is from everlasting to everlasting, and in the honourable marriage, to be his bride and his wife. And likewise, the saide Margarett did solemnly declare that, in the everlastinge power of the mighty God, and in the unalterable word, and in the presence of God, His Angells and his holy assembly, she tooke the saide George Fox to be her husband, into which marriage, many livinge testimonies were borne in the sence of the power, and presence of the livinge God, manifested in the said assembly; of which, we, whose names are here subscribed are witness." (Then follow the signatures of 92 Friends of both sexes.) *Friends' Review*, VOL. I.

inquiry should be made for such children of widows, and other poor Friends, as were suitable for apprenticeship, in order that places might be found for them among the members of their own society. His object was to secure for them suitable homes, where they would receive a guarded religious education, and would thus become qualified to promote the maintenance and comfort of their mothers in the decline of life.

Leaving London, he visited some meetings in the country, and intending to go into Leicestershire, he wrote to his wife, that "if she found it convenient she might meet him there." But when he arrived in that county, he heard that she had been again arrested in her own house, and taken to Lancaster prison, on account of the old sentence of premunire, from the penalty of which she had been released by an order of the king and council, the year before. After visiting a few more meetings, he returned to London, where he despatched Mary Lower and Sarah Fell, two of his wife's daughters, to wait on the king, in order to obtain from him a full discharge. After diligent attention, they at length obtained an order to the sheriff for her release, which Sarah Fell carried to Lancaster without delay. She was also the bearer of the following letter from George Fox to his wife.

"My dear heart in the truth and life that changeth not,

"It was upon me that Mary Lower and Sarah should go to the king concerning thy imprisonment; and to Kirby, that the power of the Lord might appear over them all in thy deliverance. They went; and then thought to have come down; but it was upon me to stay them a little longer, that they might follow the business till it was effected: which it now is, and is here sent. The late declaration of mine hath been very serviceable, people being generally satisfied with it. So no more but my love in the holy Seed.

George Fox."

The "declaration" mentioned in the foregoing letter, was written on the occasion of a fresh persecution which followed the renewal of the Conventicle Act, in 1670.

He also wrote to the magistrates as follows:

"O FRIENDS, consider this act, which limits our meetings to five. Is this to do as ye would be done by? Would ye be so served yourselves? We own Christ Jesus as well as you, his coming, death, and resurrection; and if we be contrary minded to you in some things, is not this the apostle's exhortation, to 'wait till God hath revealed it?' Doth not he say, 'What is not of faith is sin?' Seeing we have not faith in things which ye would have us to do, would it not be sin in us if we should act contrary to our faith? Why should any man have power over any other man's faith, seeing Christ is the author of it? When the apostles preached in the name of Jesus, and great multitudes heard them, and the rulers forbade them to speak any more in that name, did not they bid them judge whether it were better to obey God or man?" . . . . . "This is from those who wish you all well, and desire your everlasting good and prosperity, called Quakers; who seek the peace and good of all people, though they afflict us, and cause us to suffer.

GEORGE FOX."

The renewal of the conventicle act, which had expired by its own limitation, was effected chiefly through the instigation of the Anglican clergy, and, after its re-enactment, they spared no pains to promote its rigid execution.* Its severity fell chiefly on Friends, whose meetings were broken up by armed bands, and the members, after being treated with brutal violence, were arrested, and often imprisoned.

George Fox, being in London at the time the act came into force, behaved with his accustomed intrepidity, by attending the meeting at Grace-church street, although he knew that he was more obnoxious to the persecuting magistrates than any other member of the Society. "When I came there," he writes, in his Journal, "I found the street full of people, and a guard set to keep Friends out of their meeting-house. I

* See Dissertation on Testimonies, near the end of this volume.

went to the other passage out of Lombard street, where also I found a guard; but the court was full of people, and a Friend was speaking amongst them: but spoke not long.

"When he had done, I stood up, and was moved to say, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against that which pricks thee.' Then I showed, it is Saul's nature that persecutes still, and that they, who persecute Christ in his members now, where he is made manifest, kick against that which pricks them. That it was the birth of the flesh that persecuted the birth born of the spirit, and that it was the nature of dogs to tear and devour the sheep; but that we suffered as sheep that bite not again; for we were a peaceable people, and loved them that persecuted us. After I had spoken awhile to this effect, the constable came with an informer and soldiers; and as they plucked me down, I said, 'Blessed are the peace-makers.' The commander of the soldiers put me among the soldiers, and bid them secure me, saying to me, 'You are the man I looked for.' They took also John Burnyeat, with another Friend, and had us away first to the Exchange, and afterwards towards Moorfields. As we went along the streets, the people were very moderate. Some of them laughed at the constable, and told him, 'We would not run away.' The informer went with us unknown, till falling into discourse with one of the company, he said, 'It would never be a good world till all the people came to the good old religion that was two hundred years ago.' Whereupon I asked him, 'Art thou a Papist? What! a Papist informer? for two hundred years ago there was no other religion but that of the Papists.' He saw he had ensnared himself, and was vexed at it; for as he went along the streets, I spoke often to him, and manifested what he was. When we were come to the mayor's house, and were in the court-yard, several asked me, 'How and for what I was taken?' I desired them to ask the informer; and also know what his name was; but he refused to tell his name. Whereupon one of the mayor's officers, looking out at a window, told him, 'He should

tell his name before he went away: for the lord mayor would know by what authority he intruded himself with soldiers into the execution of those laws which belonged to the civil magistrate to execute, and not to the military.' After this, he was eager to be gone, and went to the porter to be let out. One of the officers called to him, saying, 'Have you brought people here to inform against, and now will you go away before my lord mayor comes?' Some called to the porter not to let him out; whereupon he forcibly pulled open the door, and slipped out. No sooner was he come into the street, but the people gave a shout that made the street ring again, crying out, 'A Papist informer! A Papist informer!' We desired the constable and soldiers to go and rescue him out of the people's hands, lest they should do him a mischief. They went and brought him into the mayor's entry, where we stayed awhile: but when he went out again, the people received him with such another shout. Whereupon the soldiers were obliged to rescue him once more, and then they had him into an house in an alley, where they persuaded him to change his periwig; so he got away unknown. When the mayor came, we were brought into the room where he was, and some of his officers would have taken off our hats, which he perceiving, bid them let us alone, and not meddle with our hats; 'for,' said he, 'they are not yet brought before me in judicature.' So we stood by, while he examined some Presbyterian and Baptist teachers; with whom he was somewhat sharp, and convicted them. After he had done with them, I was brought to the table where he sat; and then the officers took off my hat."

The Mayor. "Mr. Fox, you are an eminent man among those of your profession; pray, will you be instrumental to dissuade them from meeting in such great numbers? for, seeing Christ hath promised, that where two or three are met in his name, he will be in the midst of them; and the king and parliament are graciously pleased to allow of four to meet together to worship God; why will you not be content to par-

take both of Christ's promise to two or three, and the king's indulgence of four?"

GEORGE FOX. "Christ's promise was not to discourage many from meeting together in his name, but to encourage the few, that the fewest might not forbear to meet because of their fewness. But if Christ hath promised to manifest his presence in the midst of so small an assembly, where but two or three were gathered in his name, how much more would his presence abound where two or three hundred are gathered to his name! Consider, also, whether this act would not have taken hold of Christ, with his twelve apostles and seventy disciples, if it had been in their time, who used to meet often together, and that in great numbers? However, this act does not concern us; for it was made against seditious meetings, of such as met, under colour and pretence of religion, to contrive insurrections, as (the act says) late experience had shown; but we had been sufficiently tried and proved, and always found peaceable, and therefore thou wouldst do well to put a difference between the innocent and the guilty."

MAYOR. "The act was made against meetings, and a worship not according to the liturgy."

GEORGE FOX. "According to, does not mean the very same thing. Is not the liturgy according to the scripture? And may we not read scriptures and speak scriptures?"

MAYOR. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "This act takes hold only of such as meet to plot and contrive insurrections, as late experience hath shown; but ye have never experienced that from us! Because thieves are sometimes on the road, must not honest men travel? And because plotters and contrivers have met to do mischief, must not an honest peaceable people meet to do good? If we had been a people that met to plot and contrive insurrections, we might have drawn ourselves into fours; for four might do more mischief in plotting than if there were four hundred, because four might speak out their minds more

freely one to another, than four hundred could. Therefore, we, being innocent, and not the people the act concerns, we keep our meetings as we used to do. I believe that thou knowest in thy conscience we are innocent." After some more discourse the Mayor took their names, and the places where they lodged; and at length, as the informer was gone, set them at liberty.

This mayor was Samuel Starling, who behaved in this instance with great mildness, but afterwards became a severe persecutor of Friends. It was he who presided at the memorable trial of William Penn and William Mead, at the Old Bailey, in this year.

George Fox, being now at liberty, was asked by some of the Friends with him, "Whither he would go?" He answered, "To Grace-church street meeting again, if it is not over." When they came there, the people were generally gone. They then went to a Friend's house, and sent out to inquire how it had fared with the other meetings in the city. They were informed that at some of the meeting-places Friends were kept out; at others they were taken, but set at liberty again in a few days. George Fox remarks in his Journal, "A glorious time it was, for the Lord's power came over all, and his everlasting truth got renown. For, as fast as some that were speaking were taken down, others were moved of the Lord to stand up and speak, to the admiration of the people; and the more, because many Baptists and other sectaries left their public meetings, and came to see how the Quakers would stand."

As soon as the heat of persecution was somewhat abated, he left the city, and attending meetings on his way, went to Reading, where most of the Friends, residing near, were in prison. He visited them, and after being awhile in their company, several other persons coming in, they had a meeting for divine worship, in which "he declared the word of life, encouraging them in the truth, and they were refreshed in feeling the presence and power of the Lord amongst them."

As he passed on through Surrey, Sussex, and Kent, he had many precious meetings. In several instances he was in imminent peril of being taken, but was providentially preserved.

Being at this time much burdened with a sense of the wickedness prevailing in the nation, he was introduced into a state of deep suffering and spiritual baptism, insomuch that his strength failed him, his hearing and sight were impaired, and his friends were apprehensive that he could not long survive. While in this condition, he was much engaged in prayer to the Lord, that he would please to prosper Truth, and preserve justice and equity in the land,—and that he would put it into the hearts of the magistrates to suppress violence, cruelty, and profanity.

He says in his Journal, "I was under great sufferings at this time, beyond what I have words to declare. For I was brought into the deep, and saw all the religions of the world, and the people that lived in them, and the priests that held them up, who were a company of men-eaters, eating up the people like bread, and gnawing the flesh from off their bones. But as for true religion and worship, and ministers of God, alack! I saw there was none amongst those of the world that pretended to it." . . . . . "Though it was a cruel, bloody, persecuting time, yet the Lord's power went over all, his everlasting seed prevailed; and Friends were made to stand firm and faithful in the Lord's power. Some sober persons of other professions would say, 'If Friends did not stand, the nation would run into debauchery.'

"Though by reason of weakness, I could not travel amongst Friends as I used to do, yet, in the motion of life, I sent the following lines, as an encouraging testimony, to them:

"My dear Friends:—The seed is above all.* In it walk; in which ye all have life. Be not amazed at the weather; for always the just suffered by the unjust, but the just had the

* By the "seed" he means Christ, the Eternal Word. See Gen. iii. 1 and 5; Gal. iii. 16; and John iii. 9.

dominion. All along ye may see, by faith the mountains were subdued; and the rage of the wicked, with his fiery darts, were quenched. Though the waves and storms be high, yet your faith will keep you, so as to swim above them; for they are but for a time, and the truth is without time. Therefore keep on the mountain of holiness, ye who are led to it by the light, where nothing shall hurt. Do not think that anything will outlast the truth, which standeth sure; and is over that which is out of the truth. For the good will overcome the evil, the light darkness, the life death, virtue vice, and righteousness unrighteousness. The false prophet cannot overcome the true; but the true prophet, Christ, will overcome all the false. So be faithful, and live in that which doth not think the time long.

GEORGE FOX."

"Whilst I was under this spiritual suffering, the state of the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven, was opened to me; which some carnal-minded people had looked upon to be like an outward city, dropped out of the elements. I saw the beauty and glory of it, the length, the breadth, and the height thereof, all in complete proportion. I saw that all, who are within the light of Christ, in his faith, which he is the author of, in the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, which Christ, the holy prophet and apostles were in, and within the grace, truth and power of God, which are the walls of the city, such are within the city, are members of this city, and have right to eat of the tree of life, which yields her fruit every month, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. But they that are out of the grace, truth, light, Spirit and power of God, such as resist the Holy Ghost, quench, vex and grieve the Spirit of God who hate the light, turn from the grace of God into wantonness, and do despite to the Spirit of Grace, such as have erred from the faith, made shipwreck of it and of a good conscience, who abuse the power of God, and despise prophesying, revelation, and inspiration, these are the

dogs and unbelievers that are without the city. These make up the great city of Babylon, confusion and her cage, the power of darkness; and the evil spirit of error surrounds and covers them over." . . . . . .

"Many things more did I see concerning the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, which are hard to be uttered, and would be hard to be received. But, in short, this holy city is within the light; and all that are within the light are within the city: the gates whereof stand open all the day (for there is no night there) that all may come in. Christ's blood being shed for every man, he tasted death for every man, and enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; and his grace that brings salvation, having appeared to all men, there is no place or language where his voice may not be heard." . . . .

When George Fox was so far recovered that he could walk, he returned to London and attended the meeting at Gracechurch street where, notwithstanding his physical debility, he was enabled, through divine help, "to declare the word of life."

His wife was still in prison at Lancaster, for although an order for her release had been obtained from the king, yet her persecutors, on some pretence of informality, found means to detain her. But now the storm of persecution being a little abated, he induced Martha Fisher and another female Friend to lay her case again before the king, who granted a discharge under the broad seal to clear both her and her estate. This document George Fox forwarded to her by a Friend, with directions how she should proceed to obtain her release. He informed her at the same time, that he had a prospect of a religious visit to the British provinces in America; and he desired her to hasten to him at London, as soon as she conveniently could, for the ship in which he expected to sail was then fitting for the voyage. She accordingly came as soon as she was liberated, and he began to prepare for his mission.

The London yearly meeting of Friends being near at hand, he stayed to attend it; and then embarked at Gravesend,

on the 12th of the 6th month (then August) 1671, on board the yacht Industry, Thomas Foster master, bound for Barbadoes. He had for the companions of his voyage the following named Friends, viz: Thomas Briggs, William Edmundson, John Rouse, John Stubbs, Solomon Eccles, James Lancaster, John Cartwright, Robert Widders, George Pattison, John Hull, Elizabeth Hooten, and Elizabeth Miers; besides other passsengers amounting in all to about fifty. The vessel proved to be a swift sailer, but she was so leaky that the crew and some of the passengers were generally kept at the pumps night and day.

One afternoon, when they had been about three weeks at sea, they espied a vessel about three leagues astern, which seemed to give them chase. The captain said it was a "Sallee man-of-war," a piratical vessel from the Barbary coast; but he seemed at first to apprehend no danger, saying, "Come, let us go to supper, and when it grows dark we shall lose her." When the sun went down, the yacht altered her course, but the pirate continued in pursuit by moonlight, and gained upon them. At night, the captain and others came to George Fox, and asked him "What they should do?" He answered, "I am no mariner, what do you think is best to be done?" They replied, "There are but two ways, either to outrun him, or to tack about, and hold the same course we were going before." "If he is a thief," said George, "he will tack about too, and as for outrunniug him, it is to no purpose to talk of that; for we see he sails faster than we." The captain then repeated his question, "What shall we do?" and added, "If the mariners had taken Paul's counsel, they had not come to the damage they did." George said, "It is a trial of our faith, and the Lord must be waited on for counsel."

He then sought for mental retirement, and spiritual communion with God, in which state it was shown him by the Lord, "That his life and power were placed between them and the ship that pursued them." This assurance he communicated

to the captain, advising him to tack about, and steer their right course, to put out all their lights but the one they steered by, and to request the passengers to be still and quiet. About the eleventh hour at night, the watch called out, "They are just upon us," and George Fox, looking through a port-hole, saw the pirate close upon them, the moon being then nearly down. He was about to rise and go on deck, but, remembering the word of the Lord, that "His power was placed between them and their pursuers," he lay down again. Soon after this, the moon set, or was obscured, a fresh gale sprang up, and they saw the pirate no more.*

On the morrow, being First-day, they had, as usual during the voyage, a public meeting for divine worship. The Lord's presence was felt eminently amongst them, and George Fox expressed his fervent desire, "That they would mind the mercies of the Lord, who had delivered them; for they might have been all in the Turk's hands by that time, had not the Lord's hand saved them." The captain and some of the crew afterwards endeavoured to persuade the passengers that it was not a Barbary pirate which chased them, but a merchant-ship going to the Canaries, upon which George Fox warned them that "they should take heed of slighting the mercies of God." The Friends were afterwards confirmed in their belief that it was a pirate; for, during their stay in Barbadoes, a merchant from Sallee arrived there, and told the people, "That one of the Sallee men-of-war saw and chased a monstrous yacht at sea, and was just upon her, but there was a spirit in her that he could not take."

On the 3d of the 8th month (October) 1671, they anchored in Carlisle bay, Barbadoes, after a passage of more than seven weeks. During most of the voyage, George Fox was very sick of a fever, and after landing he continued quite ill for three weeks, which was attributed to the heat of the climate operating upon a constitution already enfeebled by long im-

* George Fox's Journal, II. 129, and W. Edmundson's Journal, p. 60.

prisonments, and great hardships endured in England. As he was unable to travel, the Friends held their meeting for church discipline at the house of Thomas Rouse, where he lay. He gave them much salutary advice in relation to various points of discipline, and exhorted them especially to be careful that none should marry who were of too near kindred; that a proper time should be allowed after the decease of a former companion, before a second marriage was contracted; and as some had married very young, even as early as 13 or 14 years of age, he admonished them against such childish marriages.

He advised them to keep exact records of marriages, births, and burials, and copies of the testimonies issued against those who persisted in walking disorderly. "Respecting their negroes," he says, "I desired them to endeavour to train them up in the fear of God, as well those that were bought with their money, as them that were born in their families. that all might come to the knowledge of the Lord; that so, with Joshua, every master of a family might say, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' I desired also, that they would cause their overseers to deal mildly and gently with their negroes, and not use cruelty towards them, as the manner of some hath been and is; and that after certain years of servitude they should make them free. Many sweet and precious things were opened in these meetings, by the spirit and power of the Lord, to the edifying, confirming, and building up of Friends, in the faith and holy order of the gospel." *

His mind being deeply concerned for the welfare and spiritual progress of Friends in England, he wrote them an edifying letter, which concludes as follows:

"See that godliness, holiness, righteousness, truth, and virtue, the fruits of the good Spirit, flow over the bad and its fruits, that ye may answer that which is of God in all; for your Heavenly Father is glorified in that you bring forth

* See section on Slavery, in the Dissertation on Testimonies.

much fruit. Therefore ye, who are plants of his planting, his trees of righteousness, see that every tree be full of fruit. Keep in true humility, and in the true love of God, which doth edify his body, that the true nourishment from the head, the refreshing springs, and rivers of water, and bread of life, may be plenteously known and felt amongst you, that so praises may ascend to God. Be faithful to the Lord God, and just and true in all your dealings and doings with and towards men. Be not negligent in your men's meetings [for discipline] to admonish, exhort, and reprove, in the spirit of love and of meekness, and to seek that which is lost, and to bring back again that which hath been driven away. Let all minds, spirits, souls, and hearts, be bended down under the yoke of Christ Jesus, the power of God. Much I could write, but am weak, and have been mostly since I left you. Burdens and travails I have been under, and gone through many ways, but it is well. The Lord Almighty knows my work which he hath sent me forth to do by his everlasting arm and power, which is from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be his holy name, which I am in, and in which my love is to you all.

GEORGE FOX."

When sufficiently recovered to go abroad, he paid a visit to the governor, who received him courteously, and treated him with much kindness. There was, soon after, a great meeting of Friends at Bridgetown, which was attended by the governor, by other officers, civil and military, and by the most respectable citizens. It was a season of divine favour, in which George Fox and other Friends were enabled to labour in the good cause to general satisfaction.

Many other precious meetings were held during their stay in the island. At one of these, Colonel Lyne, a sedate man, said to George Fox, "Now I can gainsay such as I have heard speak evil of you, who say you do not own Christ, nor that he died; whereas I perceive that you exalt Christ in all his offices beyond what I have ever heard before."

As many false and scandalous reports concerning Friends

were spread through the island, George Fox, with some other Friends, drew up a declaration addressed to the governor of Barbadoes, with his council and assembly, and all others in power, both civil and military, in the island. The doctrinal part of this paper being inserted in a Dissertation near the close of this volume, it is only necessary to notice here the concluding part of it, which relates to an accusation made against Friends, "that they taught the negroes to rebel."

This calumny probably originated in the fact that George Fox, and other Friends, had manifested much concern for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the slaves; advising the masters "to bring them to meetings, to treat them kindly, and after certain years of servitude to set them free." But in relation to this charge, they say, in their declaration, "It is a thing we utterly abhor." . . . . . "That which we have spoken to them is to exhort and admonish them to be sober, to fear God, to love their masters and mistresses, to be faithful and diligent in their service and business, and then their masters and overseers would love them, and deal kindly and gently with them." And furthermore they averred, that they had exhorted the slaves to treat each other kindly, and to avoid all vice, for there are but two ways, one that leads to Heaven, where the righteous go; and the other that leads to Hell, the abode of the wicked. In conclusion they say, "We esteem it a duty incumbent on us to pray with and for, to teach, instruct, and admonish, those in and belonging to our families; this being a command of the Lord, disobedience whereunto will provoke his displeasure, as may be seen in Jeremiah x. 25: 'Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.'"

Having completed his services in the island of Barbadoes, he set sail for Jamaica the 8th of 11th month 1671, [February 1672]. Just before sailing he addressed a letter to his wife, as follows:

"Barbadoes, 6th of the 11th month, 1671.

"My Dear Heart: To whom is my love, and to all the children in the seed of life that changeth not, but is over all; blessed be the Lord forever! I have undergone great sufferings in my body and spirit, beyond words; but the God of Heaven be praised, his truth is over all. I am now well; and if the Lord permit,—within a few days I pass from Barbadoes towards Jamaica; and think to stay but little there. I desire that ye may be all kept free in the seed of life, out of all cumberances. Friends are generally well. Remember me to Friends that inquire after me. So no more, but my love in the seed and life that changeth not.

George Fox."

He had a quick and easy passage to Jamaica, and was accompanied thither by several of his friends, among whom was Elizabeth Hooten, a woman of great age, one of his earliest proselytes, and for many years a faithful minister of the gospel. She died in Jamaica after a very short illness, and manifested, in her peaceful close, the sustaining power of Heavenly Truth.

George Fox and his friends had much religious service in the island; their meetings were large, and many were convinced of Friends' doctrines.

After having been about seven weeks in Jamaica, he embarked for Maryland, accompanied by his Friends William Edmundson, Robert Widders, James Lancaster, John Cartwright and George Pattison. On the 8th of the first month (March) 1672, they set sail, but encountered head winds and boisterous weather, by which they were exposed to great danger. "The storms and tempests," he says, "were so great that the sailors knew not what to do, but let the ship go which way she would; then did we pray unto the Lord; who did graciously hear and accept us, and did calm the winds and seas, and gave us seasonable weather, and made us to rejoice in his salvation; blessed and praised be the holy name

of the Lord, whose power hath dominion over all, and whom the winds and seas obey."

They were between six and seven weeks on their passage, and on entering the mouth of the Patuxent river, a great storm arose, during which a boat containing several men and women of some note in the colony, was forced by stress of weather to seek their protection. These colonists remained on board some days, and the Friends had a good meeting with them in the ship.

CHAPTER XXII.

His kind reception in Maryland—J. Burnyeat—General Meetings at West River and Cliffs—Eastern Shore—Meeting with Indians—Journey to New Jersey—Long Island—Rhode Island—Yearly Meeting—Shelter Island—Meets William Edmundson—Returns through New Jersey, Newcastle, Third-Haven—Sails for Virginia—Travels to Carolina—Meetings with Whites and Indians—Travels in Virginia—Establishes Meetings for Discipline—Disorders produced in Virginia by J. Perrot—George Fox returns to Maryland—Sails for England—Arrives at Bristol, and meets his wife—Declaration of indulgence, and liberation of four hundred Friends—Travels to London—Goes with his wife to visit William Penn at Rickmansworth.

1672–3.

THE progress of George Fox through the British American provinces, was everywhere hailed with joy by the members of his own society; and in most places there was a disposition manifested by the public at large, to receive with courtesy, and treat with respect, so distinguished a guest. Although in his native land he had been a great sufferer for conscience' sake, and in his early career had often been treated with contumely, he had now, by his wonderful success, his irreproachable character, his undaunted courage, and dignity of character, become everywhere an object of interest, and there were few who did not desire to hear from his own lips those powerful

appeals, which could awaken the conscience and convince the understanding.

There was, moreover, in some of the American colonies, and especially in Maryland, Virginia, and Carolina, a dearth of public preaching, and an earnest desire to hear the truths of the gospel expounded.

When he and his companions landed at the mouth of the Patuxent, they learned that John Burnyeat, a minister from England, had appointed a General Meeting for Friends in Maryland, to be held at West River, in the 2d month, (April, O. S.,) 1672.

"It was," says George Fox, "so ordered in the good providence of God, that we landed just time enough to reach that meeting, by which means we had a very seasonable opportunity of taking the Friends of the province together." It was a very large meeting, being attended not only by Friends, but by many of other persuasions, among whom were the speaker of the assembly and other persons of distinction. After the meeting for public worship was ended, they held a meeting for church discipline, in which, says John Burnyeat, "George Fox did wonderfully open the service thereof unto Friends, and they, with gladness of heart, received advice in such necessary things as were then opened unto them, and all were comforted and edified." * Although meetings for worship had been held by Friends in Maryland for fourteen years, it does not appear that, prior to this time, there had been any meetings for discipline.

From West River, they proceeded to the Cliffs, also in Maryland, where another General Meeting for worship and discipline was held. Here, "the truth was received with reverence, most of the backsliders came in again, and several of those meetings were established for taking care of the affairs of the church." †

After these two memorable meetings, the ministers in attendance from abroad, parted company, in order to fulfil the

* J. Burnyeat's Journal, 43–4. † George Fox's Journal, II. 146.

services to which they were severally called. James Lancaster and John Cartwright went by sea to New England, William Edmundson and three other Friends sailed for Virginia, and John Burnyeat, Robert Widders, and George Pattison accompanied George Fox to the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Here they had another "large and heavenly meeting," in which many people "received the Truth with gladness, and Friends were greatly refreshed."*

George Fox sent an invitation to "the Indian emperor and his kings to attend this meeting. In the evening," he says, "I had two good opportunities with them; they heard the word of the Lord willingly, and confessed to it. What I spoke to them, I desired them to speak to their people; and let them know that God was raising up his tabernacle of witness in their wilderness country, and was setting up his standard and glorious ensign of righteousness. They carried themselves very courteously and lovingly, and inquired, 'Where the next meeting would be,' and said 'they would come to it;' yet they said, 'they had a great debate with their council before they came now.'"

Next day, he and his companions set out from Third-Haven creek, on their journey to New-England, travelling on horseback through the wilderness, over bogs and great rivers. They generally crossed the rivers in canoes, causing their horses to swim alongside, or to follow them. After passing Newcastle, they crossed the river Delaware, not without great danger; and then, with much difficulty, they procured a guide through the western part of New-Jersey, which, at that time, was inhabited only by Indians. Sometimes they slept in the woods by a fire, at others they lodged in the Indian wigwams, and their horses were allowed to graze through the night. At an Indian town, they were cordially received by a sachem and his wife, who gave them a mat to lie on; but their host, though hospitably inclined, was scarce of provisions, having

* George Fox's Journal, II. 146.

taken but little game that day. At length they came to Middletown, in East New-Jersey, where they were gladly received by Richard Hartshorne, who accompanied them to the Half-year's Meeting, at Oyster Bay, Long Island.

On the First-day of the week, being the next after their arrival, the meeting for worship began, and continued two days; then followed a meeting for church discipline, which occupied one day. This meeting was attended by some disaffected persons professing to be Friends, but opposed to the order of the discipline. They had been exceedingly troublesome at former meetings, and now endeavoured to make a disturbance, but George Fox would not suffer it. He informed them that a meeting should be appointed for hearing them, on the following day, which was accordingly done. It was attended by many of those discontented persons, whose objections were answered, the minds of Friends satisfied, and "the Lord's power broke forth gloriously, to the confounding of the gainsayers."*

After attending some other meetings, they set sail for Rhode Island, where they arrived the 30th of the 3d month (May) 1672, and were kindly entertained at the house of Nicholas Easton, the governor. During the following week, the Yearly Meeting for Friends of New-England, and other colonies adjacent, was held on the island. It continued six days. The first four were occupied with meetings for public worship, to which great numbers resorted, for "there being no priests on the island, and no restriction to any particular way of worship, and the governor, deputy-governor, and several justices of the peace daily frequenting the meetings, so encouraged the people, that they flocked in from all parts of the island." George Fox further remarks, "I have rarely observed a people, in the state wherein they stood, to hear with more attention, diligence, and affection, than generally they did, during the four days; which was also taken notice

* George Fox's Journal, II, 148–9; J. Burnyeat's Journal, 46.

of by other Friends. These public meetings over, the men's meeting began, which was large, precious, and weighty. The day following was the women's meeting, which also was large and very solemn.

"These two meetings being for ordering the affairs of the church, many weighty things were opened, and communicated to them, by way of advice, information, and instruction, in the services relating thereunto; that all might be kept clean, sweet, and savoury amongst them.

"In these, several men's and women's meetings for other parts were agreed and settled, to take care of the poor, and other affairs of the church, and to see that all who profess truth walk according to the glorious gospel of God.

"When this great General Meeting was ended, it was somewhat hard for Friends to part, for the glorious power of the Lord, which was over all, and his blessed truth and life flowing amongst them, had so knit and united them together, that they spent two days in taking leave one of another, and of the Friends of the island; and then being mightily filled with the presence and power of the Lord, they went away with joyful hearts to their several habitations, in the several colonies where they lived."

Their services at this place being ended, Friends in the ministry from abroad again dispersed, in order to visit those parts of the vineyard into which they were severally called. John Burnyeat, John Cartwright and George Pattison, went into the eastern parts of New England; James Lancaster, accompanied by John Stubbs, who had lately come from Barbadoes, intended to follow soon after in the same service; and Robert Widders remained with George Fox some time longer on the island, where they found great openness for religious labour.

"During this time," says George Fox, "a marriage was celebrated among Friends in this island, and we were present. It was at a Friend's house, who had formerly been governor of the island: and three justices of the peace, with many

others not in profession with us, and Friends also, said, They never saw such a solemn assembly on such an occasion, so weighty a marriage, and so comely an order." Thus, truth was set over all. This might serve for an example to others; for there were some present from many other places.

"After this I had a great travail in spirit concerning the Ranters in those parts, who had been rude at a meeting which I was not at. Wherefore, I appointed a meeting amongst them, believing the Lord would give me power over them; which he did to his praise and glory, blessed be his name forever! There were at this meeting many Friends, and divers other people; some of them were justices of the peace, and officers, who were generally well affected with the truth. One who had been a justice twenty years, was convinced, spoke highly of the truth, and more highly of me than it is fit for me to mention or take notice of."

The governor of the Province, and many others, accompanied George Fox to Providence, where he had a meeting in a great barn, which was thronged with people, and "The glorious power of the Lord shined over all." He had meetings, also, at Narraganset and other places, where he was favoured to preach the gospel with satisfaction and success. Having heard at one place that some of the magistrates had said, "If they had money enough they would hire him to be their minister," he remarked to his friends, "That it was time for him to be gone, for if their eyes were so much turned to him or any man, they would not come to their own [spiritual] teacher." "This thing of hiring ministers," he observes, "has spoiled many, by hindering them from improving their own talents; whereas our labour is to bring all to their own teacher in themselves."

In company with several Friends, he embarked in a sloop for Shelter island, which lies contiguous to the eastern end of Long Island. Although the distance from Rhode Island was but twenty-seven leagues, they had a most uncomfortable passage of three days. On the next day after landing, he held

a meeting there, and "The same week," he says, "I had a meeting among the Indians, at which were their king, with his council, and about one hundred more of the natives. They sat down like Friends, and heard very attentively while I spoke to them by an interpreter, an Indian that could speak English well. After meeting, they appeared very loving, and confessed what was said to them was truth."

While on the island, he was visited by William Edmundson, who had just returned from his journey to Virginia, where he had travelled with much difficulty through a wilderness country, but reported that he met with "a tender people, and had good service for the Lord." After spending two or three days together, "They took leave of each other in the sweet love of God;"* William Edmundson intending to return shortly to his home in Ireland, and George Fox, with his companion, going to Long Island.

Returning to the south, through New-Jersey, they came to Shrewsbury, where they attended meetings for worship and discipline. While at this place, an accident occurred, which is thus related by George Fox in his Journal: "John Jay, a Friend of Barbadoes, who came with us from Rhode Island, and intended to accompany us through the woods to Maryland, being to try a horse, got upon his back, and the horse fell a-running, cast him down upon his head, and broke his neck, as the people said. Those that were near him took him up as dead, carried him a good way, and laid him on a tree. I got to him as soon as I could; and, feeling him, concluded he was dead. As I stood pitying him and his family, I took hold of his hair, and his head turned any way, his neck was so limber. Whereupon I took his head in both my hands, and setting my knees against the tree, I raised his head, and perceived there was nothing out or broken that way. Then I put one hand under his chin, and the other behind his head, and raised his head two or three times with all my strength,

* W. Edmundson's Journal, 73.

and brought it in. I soon perceived his neck began to grow stiff again, and then he began to rattle in his throat, and quickly after to breathe. The people were amazed; but I bade them have a good heart, be of good cheer, and carry him into the house. They did so, and set him by the fire. I bid them get him something warm to drink, and put him to bed. After he had been in the house awhile, he began to speak; but did not know where he had been. The next day we passed away (and he with us, pretty well) about sixteen miles, to a meeting at Middletown, through woods and bogs, and over a river; where we swam our horses, and got over ourselves upon a hollow tree. Many hundred miles did he travel with us after this."

After attending a "glorious meeting" at Middletown, they proceeded on their way towards Maryland, having hired Indian guides to conduct them through the wilderness. As they passed through the Indian towns, they found many opportunities to preach the gospel to the natives. The route was exceedingly laborious, and sometimes dangerous, there being many deep bogs and wide streams to cross, yet they generally travelled thirty or forty miles a day, and at night lay by a fire in the woods. On their arrival at Newcastle, George Fox was invited to the governor's house, and hospitably entertained. His companions were also provided for by the inhabitants. They had a precious meeting the following day, at the governor's house; many acknowledged the truth of their doctrines, and some embraced them in the love of the gospel.

Continuing their journey through the unbroken forests, and fording deep and dangerous streams, they came to Miles river in Maryland, near which they had two meetings, and then proceeding to Kent county, they held a meeting, which was attended by some hundreds of people, among whom were an Indian sachem and two of his chiefs. With these Indians, George Fox had a very satisfactory interview. He spoke to them through an interpreter, and they having listened atten-

tively to his doctrines, manifested towards him the most cordial feelings.

At Third-Haven creek, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, he attended, on the 3d of the 8th month, a General Meeting for all the Friends of Maryland, which he thus describes in his Journal: "This meeting held five days. The first three we had meetings for public worship, to which people of all sorts came; the other two were spent in the men's and women's meetings for discipline. To those public meetings came many Protestants of divers sorts, and some Papists; amongst whom were several magistrates and their wives, with other persons of chief account in the country. Of the common people, it was thought there were sometimes a thousand at one of those meetings; so that, though they had enlarged their meeting-place, and made it as big again as it was before, it could not contain the people.

"I went by boat every day four or five miles to the meeting, and there were so many boats at that time passing upon the river, that it was almost like the Thames. The people said, 'There were never so many boats seen there together before;' and one of the justices said he never saw so many people together in that country. It was a very heavenly meeting, wherein the presence of the Lord was gloriously manifested, Friends were sweetly refreshed, the people generally satisfied, and many convinced; for the blessed power of the Lord was over all: everlasting praises to his holy name forever! After the public meetings were over, the men's and women's [for discipline] began, and were held the other two days; for I had something to impart to them, which concerned the glory of God, the order of the gospel, and the government of Christ Jesus. When these meetings were over, we took our leave of Friends in these parts, whom we left well established in the truth."

Having attended many other meetings in Maryland, most of which were large and satisfactory, he set sail for Virginia on the 5th of the 9th month, and after a voyage of three

days, landed at Nansemond. Here he held a meeting, and then hastened towards Carolina, yet had several meetings by the way, at one of which a meeting for discipline was established. The route lay through swamps and bogs, more difficult than any they had passed, and travelling on horseback, they were wet up to the knees, yet in this condition were compelled to pass the night in the woods. On reaching Bonner's creek, a branch of the Roanoke, they left their jaded horses, and proceeded in a canoe to Albemarle Sound. Stopping by the way at several places, they had much discourse with the people, many of whom received them gladly. Among those who came to see them was Nathaniel Batts, formerly "governor of Roanoke." He inquired of the Friends, concerning a woman in Cumberland, who was said to have been healed by their prayers, after she had been given over by the physicians. George Fox replied that "They did not glory in such things, but many such things had been done by the power of Christ."

On reaching the governor's house, situated near the water, they were cordially received. Here a doctor undertook to dispute with them, maintaining that the light, or Spirit of God, had not appeared to all men, and averring that it was not in the Indians. George Fox then called an Indian and asked him, "Whether there was not something in him that reproved him when he lied or did wrong to any one?" He answered, "That there was; and that he was ashamed when he had done or spoken wrong."

Feeling a deep interest in the welfare of the aborigines, George Fox went among them, and addressed them through an interpreter. "I spoke to them," he says, "concerning Christ, showing them that he died for all men; for their sins as well as for others, and had enlightened them as well as others." They received his instructions kindly. At another time, while accompanied by John Burnyeat, he went to an Indian town, and the sachem having assembled all his people, George preached to them for the space of four or five hours.

They were very quiet and attentive, appearing delighted to hear, and when the meeting was ended they began to prepare food for their guests; but the Friends, having some distance to go that night, were obliged to decline their hospitality.*

Having spent eighteen days in North Carolina, "and made a little entrance for truth among the people," George Fox and his companions returned to Virginia; travelling again on horseback through the swamps, lying out in the woods at night, fording rivers, and enduring all the hardships incident to a journey in the wilderness. He spent three weeks travelling in Virginia, mostly among the Friends, having large and precious meetings. The last week was employed in the regulation of church discipline, which was greatly needed, for he found "a bad spirit had got up among some."

It appears that a few years prior to this date, when John Burnyeat visited Virginia, he found the meetings of Friends almost abandoned, and their testimonies greatly neglected; which he attributed to the influence of John Perrot, who had been in that province, and, pretending to a high degree of spirituality, had persuaded many that the attendance of meetings was a mere form, and the rules of discipline were but the prescriptions of men. John Burnyeat found much difficulty in obtaining a meeting among them; but his efforts were blessed in the restoration of some, and on a subsequent visit in 1671, he found a manifest improvement. The labours of George Fox in expounding the true principles of church government, were no less salutary in America than they had been in Great Britain; and to him, under Divine Providence, is the society of Friends chiefly indebted for its admirable code of discipline.

Having finished the service to which he had been called in Virginia, he and his companions set sail, in an open sloop, for Maryland; and after touching at several places, and holding some meetings, they came to the Patuxent, where they landed. Throughout the winter and spring, they continued travelling,

* J. Burnyeat's Journal, p. 60.

mostly by water, until the General Meeting of Friends for the province of Maryland, which began the 17th of 3d month (May), 1673. This meeting continued four days, and was the last that George Fox attended in America. "The first of these days," he says, "the men and women had their meetings for business; wherein the affairs of the church were taken care of, and many things relating thereunto were opened, to their edification and comfort. The other three days were spent in public meetings for the worship of God, at which divers of considerable account in the government, and many others, were present; who were generally satisfied, and many of them reached; for it was a wonderful glorious meeting, and the mighty presence of the Lord was seen and felt over all; blessed and praised be his holy name forever, who over all giveth dominion."

At the close of the meeting, he and his companions, Robert Widders and James Lancaster, took leave of Friends, "parting with them in great tenderness, and in the sense of heavenly life," and the next day being the 25th of the month, they sailed for England.

He writes in his Journal, "We had, in our passage, very high winds and tempestuous weather, which made the sea exceeding rough, the waves rising like mountains, so that the master and sailors wondered, and said, 'They never saw the like before.' But though the wind was strong, it set for the most part with us, so that we sailed before it; and the great God who commands the winds, who is Lord of Heaven, earth, and the seas, and whose wonders are seen in the deep, steered our course, and preserved us from many imminent dangers. The same good hand of Providence that went with us, and carried us safely over, watched over us in our return, and brought us safely back again. Thanksgiving and praises be to his holy name forever! Many sweet and precious meetings we had on board the ship during this voyage, (commonly two a week) wherein the blessed presence of the Lord did greatly refresh us, and often break in upon and tender

the company. When we came into Bristol harbour, there lay a man-of-war, and the press-master came on board to impress our men. We had a meeting at that time in the ship with the seamen, before we went to shore; and the press-master sat down with us, stayed the meeting, and was well satisfied with it. After the meeting, I spoke to him to leave two of the men he had impressed in our ship (for he had impressed four) one of which was a lame man; he said, 'at my request, he would.'

"We went on shore that afternoon, and got to Shearhampton. We procured horses, and rode to Bristol that night, where Friends received us with great joy. In the evening I wrote a letter to my wife, to give her notice of my landing.

"DEAR HEART: — This day we came into Bristol, near night, from the sea; glory to the Lord God over all for ever, who was our convoy, and steered our course! who is the God of the whole earth, of the seas and winds, and made the clouds his chariots; beyond all words blessed be his name forever! He is over all, in his great power and wisdom, amen. Robert Widders and James Lancaster are with me, and we are well. Glory to the Lord forever, who hath carried us through many perils; perils by water, and in storms, perils by pirates and robbers, perils in the wilderness, and amongst false professors; praises to him whose glory is over all forever, amen! Therefore mind the fresh life, and all live to God in it. I intend (if the Lord will) to stay awhile this way. It may be till the fair. So no more, but my love to all Friends.

GEORGE FOX."

Bristol, the 28th of the 4th month, 1673.

Soon after the foregoing letter was written, he had the satisfaction of meeting his wife, who came to Bristol, accompanied by her son-in-law, Thomas Lower, and two of her daughters. At the same time, her other son-in-law, John Rouse, William Penn and his wife, Gerard Roberts, and

George Whitehead, came from London. It being the time of the great fair, large numbers were present from different parts of the kingdom, and the Friends had "glorious and powerful meetings," in which the Lord's power was eminently felt amongst them.

During one year of the time that George Fox was employed in his mission to America, his friends in Great Britain had enjoyed a respite from persecution. In the year 1672, Charles II. issued a "declaration of indulgence," by which the penal laws against non-conformists were suspended. Soon after its publication, he was induced by the solicitation of George Whitehead, Thomas Moor and Thomas Green, to grant under the great seal a general pardon and discharge to all the Friends then in prison, numbering about 400, many of whom had been separated from their families and homes six or seven years. Some of the other dissenters, seeing the success of the Friends, applied to George Whitehead for advice and assistance in a similar application; and through his aid, the names of several Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, who were imprisoned for non-conformity, were inserted in the same instrument that secured the liberation of the Friends. Among the dissenters thus restored to liberty was John Bunyan, the celebrated author of Pilgrim's Progress, who, during twelve years, had been a prisoner for conscience' sake.*

The relief afforded by the king's clemency was gratefully accepted, but proved to be of short duration; for in the following year, he was induced by his necessities to yield to the wishes of Parliament, by revoking the declaration of indulgence, and then the spirit of intolerance again broke forth with unabated fury.

From Bristol, George Fox proceeded to Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, where he had many large and precious meetings, and much service in the gospel ministry.

* George Whitehead's Christian Progress, 350–60, and Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, in Friends' Library, XI. 382.

During this journey, he met with some who had manifested much opposition to women's meetings for church discipline; and he was enabled to point out the service of those meetings with so much clearness, that one of the chief opposers saw and acknowledged his error. Pursuing his journey through several counties, he came to Kingston upon Thames, where his wife and one of her daughters again met him. After a short stay at Kingston, he went to London, and was for some time engaged in the city and its vicinity, preaching the gospel, and attending to the sufferings of Friends.

One of the pretexts under which they were persecuted, was that they opened their shop-windows on holy-days and fast-days, being unwilling to comply with "the observation of days," imposed by human authority. George Fox maintained that, "as the true christians did not observe the Jews' holy-days in the apostles' times, neither could Friends observe the heathens' and Papists' holy-days (so called), which have set up amongst those called christians, since the apostles' days. "For we were redeemed out of days by Christ Jesus, and brought into the day which hath sprung from on high, and are come into Him, who is Lord of the Jewish sabbath, and the substance of the Jews' signs."

On leaving London, he went with his wife and her daughter to pay a visit at Rickmansworth, the residence of William Penn. It is to be regretted that we have no further account of this visit, for it must have been a season of the highest social enjoyment, when George and Margaret Fox, both remarkable for vigour of intellect and depth of religious experience, mingled in familiar converse with the gifted William Penn and his lovely Gulielma.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Arrested and committed to Worcester Jail—T. Lower remains with him —Examination at the Sessions—Taken to London—Appears before the Court of King's Bench—Sent back to Worcester—Conversation with a Priest—Doctrine of Perfection—Trial at the Quarter Sessions —Permitted to Travel—Attends Yearly Meeting—Second Trial at Worcester—Premunired—Sickness in Prison—Pardon offered, and declined—Letter from William Penn—Trial at London before Judge Hale—Released from Prison.

1673–5.

It was the lot of George Fox to experience many vicissitudes, but through Divine grace, "he had learned in whatsoever state he was, therewith to be content;" he knew both how to be abased, and how to abound, and could say with the devoted apostle, "Every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

At the close of the preceding chapter, we left him in the enjoyment of social intercourse and religious communion, at the hospitable mansion of William Penn; now we must follow him to the gloomy cells of a prison, which, in that age of bigotry, were made the receptacles alike of hardened vice and of persecuted virtue.

Accompanied by his wife, her daughter, and her son-in-law Thomas Lower, he was travelling through Worcestershire, when he was arrested by Henry Parker, a justice of the peace, who had with him a priest named Rowland Haines. These two persecutors, hearing that he was to attend a meeting at Armscot, in Tredington parish, concerted together for his apprehension; but coming too late for the meeting, they followed him to a Friend's house, where they arrested both him and Thomas Lower, and by a mittimus dated the 17th of December, 1673, sent them to Worcester jail.

When they had been some time in prison, they concluded to lay their case before Lord Windsor, the lieutenant of the county; and accordingly, they drew up a statement of the facts, showing that they were illegally taken at a friend's house, not being at the time in a religious meeting. In this paper, George Fox states that "he was bringing forward his wife on her journey towards her home in the north, and that having received a message from his mother, an ancient woman in Leicestershire, that she earnestly desired to see him before she died, he intended, as soon as he had brought his wife on her journey as far as Causal in Warwickshire, to turn into Leicestershire to visit his mother and relations there, and then to return to London." No release being obtained from this application, they were still detained in prison to await the quarter sessions.

In the meantime, great interest was made at London on behalf of Thomas Lower, whose brother was one of the king's physicians. Through his influence, a letter was obtained from Henry Savil, an officer of the king's bed-chamber, addressed to his brother Lord Windsor; but Thomas, seeing that the letter related only to his own enlargement, declined to have it delivered, for such was his affection for George Fox, that he chose to remain with him in prison, rather than to leave him there and accept his own liberty.

On the last day of the sessions, being the 21st of the 11th month, 1673, O. S., (equivalent to January, 1674,) they were called into court, when Justice Parker evinced the most determined hostility, by making a long speech to prejudice the court against them. Thomas Lower was first examined, concerning the cause of his coming into that county, of which he gave them a full and plain account. George Fox having interposed a few words, they told him they were not then examining him, but when it came to his turn, he should have liberty to speak without hindrance, and that they would not ensnare him. The examination of Thomas Lower being ended, the court proceeded with George Fox, and put to him the same

questions. He answered by stating the object of his journey, and the manner of his arrest; and he continued, "Whereas, Justice Parker, to aggravate the case, has said that when I was taken, some were with me from London, some from Cornwall, and some from Bristol; these were in a manner all but one family; for there was none from London but myself; none from the north but my wife and her daughter; none from Cornwall but my son-in-law, Thomas Lower; nor any from Bristol but one Friend, a merchant there, who met us, as it were, providentially, to assist my wife and her daughter on their journey homewards, when, by our imprisonment, they were deprived of our company and help."

The chairman of the sessions, Justice Simpson, an old Presbyterian, then said, "Your relation or account is very innocent." After interchanging whispers with Parker, he rose up and added: "You, Mr. Fox, are a famous man, and all this may be true which you have said, but that we may be better satisfied, will you take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy?"

George Fox. "Ye have promised not to ensnare us; but this is evidently a snare, for ye know that we cannot take any oath."

The oath was then read by order of the court.

George Fox. "I never took an oath in my life, but have always been true to the government. I was cast into prison at Derby, and kept a prisoner there six months, because I would not take up arms against the late King Charles at Worcester fight; and for going to meetings, was carried out of Leicestershire, and brought before Oliver Cromwell, as a plotter to bring in the present King Charles. And ye know in your consciences that we, the people called Quakers, cannot take an oath, nor swear in any case, because Christ hath forbidden it. But as to the matter or substance contained in the oaths, this I can do and say, that I do own and acknowledge the King of England to be lawful heir and successor to the realm of England, and do abhor all plots and plotters, and

contrivances against him; and I have nothing in my heart but love and good-will to him and to all men, and desire his and their prosperity; the Lord knoweth it, before whom I stand an innocent man. And as to the oath of supremacy, I deny the pope, his power, and his religion, and abhor it with my heart."

COURT. "Give him the book, give him the book."

GEORGE FOX. "The book saith, 'Swear not at all.'"

CHAIRMAN AND JUSTICES. "Take him away, jailer."

George Fox still continued his defence, and the bench became clamorous, and cried out, "Take him away. We shall have a meeting here. Why do you not take him away? That fellow (the jailer) loves to hear him preach."

GEORGE FOX, (stretching out his arm,) "The Lord forgive you, who cast me into prison for obeying the doctrine of Christ. Thus," he says, "they broke their promise in the face of the country; for they promised that I should have free liberty to speak, but now denied it; and they promised that they would not ensnare us, yet now they tendered me the oaths on purpose to ensnare me."

After he was removed from the court, Thomas Lower was told by the justices that "he was at liberty." He then began to reason with them on the injustice of liberating him and detaining his father-in-law, when both were taken under the same circumstances. But the chairman replied, "You may go about your business, for we have nothing more to say to you, seeing you are discharged." After the court was risen, he visited the justices at their chamber, when the following discourse ensued:

T. LOWER. "I desire to know what cause you have to detain my father, seeing you have discharged me? Is not this partiality? Will it not be a blemish upon you?"

JUSTICE SIMPSON. "If you be not content, we will tender you the oaths also, and send you to your father."

T. LOWER. "Ye may do so, if ye think fit; but whether ye send me to prison or not, I intend to go and wait

upon my father there; for that is now my business in this country."

JUSTICE PARKER. "Do you think, Mr. Lower, that I had not cause to send you and your father to prison, when you had such a great meeting, that the parson of the parish complained to me that he had lost the greatest part of his parishioners; so that when he comes among them, he has scarcely any auditors left?"

T. LOWER. "I have heard that the priest of that parish comes so seldom to visit his flock, (but once, it may be, or twice in a year, to gather up his tithes,) that it was but charity in my father to visit such a forlorn and forsaken flock; therefore thou hast no occasion to send my father to prison for visiting them, or for teaching, instructing, and directing them to Christ, their true teacher, who had so little comfort or benefit from their pretended pastor, who comes among them only to seek for his gain from his quarter."

Upon this the justices laughed heartily, for Doctor Crowder, the priest alluded to, was sitting among them, though unknown to Thomas Lower; and the doctor had the good sense to remain silent, not attempting to vindicate himself in a matter so well known to be true. He was afterwards, however, so much annoyed with the raillery which ensued upon this exposure, that he threatened to sue Thomas Lower in the Bishops' Court, for defamation. Thomas, when he heard of it, sent word that he would answer his suit at any time, and bring the whole parish in evidence against him. This cooled his impatience; but, some time after, he came to the prison, and brought with him a prebendary of Worcester, when, addressing himself to George Fox, he said, "What are you in prison for?"

GEORGE FOX. "Dost thou not know that? Wast thou not upon the bench when the justices tendered the oath to me? And hadst not thou an hand in it?"

DOCTOR CROWDER. "It is lawful to swear; Christ did not

forbid swearing before a magistrate, but swearing by the sun, and the like."

GEORGE FOX. "Prove that by the scriptures, if thou canst."

DOCTOR C. "St. Paul says, 'All things are lawful to me.' Therefore, swearing was lawful to him."

GEORGE FOX. "By this argument thou mayst also affirm that drunkenness, adultery, and all manner of sin, is lawful."

DOCTOR C. "Why, do you hold that adultery is unlawful?"

GEORGE FOX. "Yes, that I do."

DOCTOR C. "Why, this contradicts the saying of St. Paul."

George Fox then called the attention of the jailer and others present, to the strange doctrine advanced by his opponent. Upon this the doctor said, "He would give it from under his hand," and took a pen, but wrote very differently from what he had asserted.

Soon after the sessions, through the exertions of Friends in London, a writ of habeas corpus was sent to Worcester, to bring George Fox before the court of the king's bench; and the sheriff, having entire confidence in him, made Thomas Lower his deputy, to convey him to the metropolis. He was brought before Judge Wilde, and after being permitted to speak for himself in relation to his false imprisonment, he was ordered to appear in court again the next day. He accordingly went at the time appointed, and was treated with civility. "The Lord's presence," he says, "was with me, and his power, I felt, was over all. I stood and heard the king's attorney, whose name was Jones, who indeed spoke notably on my behalf, as did also another counsellor after him, and the judges, who were three, were all very moderate, not casting any reflecting words upon me." At length, being permitted to speak for himself, he related the cause of his journey, the manner of his arrest, the course pursued by the justices at his trial, and the declaration of fidelity he had offered to sign, instead of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy.

When he had ended, the chief-justice said, "He was now under the jurisdiction of the court of the king's bench; they would consider the case further, and if they found any error in the record or in the proceedings, he should be set at liberty." Being delivered to an officer of that court, he was permitted to go to a Friend's house to lodge, and next day at the appointed hour, he surrendered himself to the same officer. But his prospect of delivery was now obstructed by his implacable adversary, Justice Parker, who, with some of his confederates, having come to London, moved the court that he might be sent back to Worcester, and they employed four counsellors to plead against him. They prevailed with the court to give judgment, "That he should be sent down to Worcester sessions," but the prisoner was informed that "he might give bail to appear at the sessions and to be of good behaviour in the meantime." George Fox replied, "I never was of ill behaviour in my life, and you might as well put the oath to me here as to send me to Worcester, to be ensnared by the justices in their putting the oath to me, and then premuniring me, who never took an oath in my life. If I break my yea, or nay, I am content to suffer the same penalty as those who break their oaths." His adversaries had spread a malicious report, "That when he was arrested, there were many substantial men with him out of different parts of the nation,—that they had a plot in hand,—and that Thomas Lower, after being set at liberty, stayed with him in prison, to carry on their design." Yet so inconsistent was the judge, that in remanding him to Worcester jail, he allowed him to go down at his leisure, in his own way, only requiring a promise from him that he would be there at the assize. It is evident that the court had entire confidence in his veracity and integrity; they did not believe him guilty, but suffered the course of justice to be perverted in order to satisfy the clamour of his adversaries.

He stayed in London and its vicinity until the latter part of the first month (March) 1674, and then proceeded to Wor-

cester in time for the assize which commenced the 2d of the second month. Having understood that justice Parker and the clerk of the court, had agreed to omit his name in the calendar, in order that he might not be brought before the judge, he induced the judge's son to move in court that he should be called. Accordingly he appeared before Judge Turner, his old adversary, who had formerly tendered him the oaths, and premunired him at Lancaster.

JUDGE. "What do you desire, George Fox?"

GEORGE FOX. "My liberty, according to justice."

JUDGE. "Will you take the oath?"

GEORGE FOX. "I desire the court to hear the manner of my being taken and committed." He then proceeded to give a relation of his arrest and trial, adding, "That his mother, an aged woman, had expressed a desire to see him before she died, but hearing of his imprisonment, she was so grieved that she survived but a short time." He then expressed his willingness to sign a declaration of his loyalty to the king, his denial of papal supremacy, and his abhorrence of all plots and conspiracies.

The judge, being instigated by Parker, and willing to relieve himself of trouble, referred the case back to the sessions, desiring the justices to end it there, and not to bring it again before the assizes. The prisoner was, however, allowed to lodge at a Friend's house, and to have the liberty of the town until the sessions.

During this interval, he informs us in his Journal, he had some service for the Lord with several that came to visit him. At one time there came three non-conformist ministers and two lawyers, to discourse with him. One of the clergymen undertook to prove, that "The scriptures are the only rule of life." George Fox, after refuting his proof, proceeded to demonstrate "the right and proper use of the scriptures, and their excellency; and also to show that the Spirit of God, which is given to every one to profit withal—the grace of God which bringeth salvation and hath appeared to all men,

and teacheth them that obey it to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world—is the most fit, proper and universal rule which God hath given to all mankind, by which to rule, direct, govern and order their lives."

¶ In another company that came to see him, there was a priest of the established church, who inquired, "If he was grown up to perfection."

GEORGE FOX. "What I am, I am by the grace of God."

PRIEST. "That is a modest and civil answer, but 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us?' What do you say to this doctrine of the apostle John?"

GEORGE FOX. "I say with the same apostle, 'If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us who came to destroy sin and to take away sin.' So there is a time for people to see that they have sinned, and there is a time for them to see that they have sin, and there is a time for them to confess their sin, and to forsake it, and to know the blood of Christ to cleanse them from all sin. Was not Adam perfect before he fell? And were not all God's works perfect?"

PRIEST. "There might be a perfection, as Adam had, and a falling from it."

GEORGE FOX. "But there is a perfection in Christ above Adam, and beyond falling; and it was the work of the ministers of Christ to present every man perfect in Christ; for the perfecting of whom they had their gifts from Christ; therefore they that deny perfection deny the work of the ministry; and the gifts which Christ gave for the perfecting of the saints."

PRIEST. "We must be always striving."

GEORGE FOX. "It is a sad and uncomfortable sort of striving, to strive with a belief that we shall never overcome. Paul, who cried out of the body of death, did also thank God who gave him the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So there is a time of crying out for want of victory, and a time

of praising God for the victory. And Paul said, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

PRIEST. "Job was not perfect."

GEORGE FOX. "God said Job was a perfect man, that he did shun evil; and the devil was forced to confess that 'God had set an hedge about him,' which was not an outward hedge, but the invisible heavenly power."

PRIEST. "Job said, 'He chargeth his angels with folly, and the heavens are not clean in his sight.'"

GEORGE FOX. "That is a mistake: it was not Job that said so, but Eliphaz, who contended against Job."

PRIEST. "Well, but what say you to that scripture, 'The justest man that is, sinneth seven times a day'?"

GEORGE FOX. "Why truly, I say there is no such scripture."

This ended the discussion.

The next Quarter Sessions began the 29th of the 2d month (April), and George Fox being brought to the bar, Justice Street, the chairman, endeavoured to prejudice the court against him, by stating that he had a meeting at Tredington, of persons from all parts of the nation, to the terrifying of the king's subjects, for which he was committed to prison. He added, "That for the trial of his fidelity, the oaths had been tendered to him; and now, having had time to consider of it, he asked him whether he was willing to take the oaths?"

George Fox, having obtained permission to speak, stated, as he had done before, that those who were with him when he was taken, were, with one exception, all members of his own family; they were on their journey, and the meeting they had attended was peaceable, and without arms, nor could any one say he was terrified by it. As to the oaths, he had already shown why he could not take them, and what he was willing to sign in lieu of them.

The oaths having been tendered, the indictment was read to the jury, and the chairman said to the prisoner, "Are you guilty?"

GEORGE FOX. "Nay; for it is a great bundle of lies. Dost thou not know in thy conscience that the statements in the indictment are lies?"

CHAIRMAN. "It is our form."

GEORGE FOX. "It is not a true form."

CHAIRMAN. "Are you guilty?"

GEORGE FOX. "I am not guilty of the matter nor of the form, for I am against the Pope and popery, and will acknowledge and set hand to that."

The chairman then instructed the jury how they should proceed, and what they should write on the back of the indictment.

GEORGE FOX, (to the jury,) "It is for Christ's sake, and in obedience to his and his apostles' command, that I cannot swear; therefore take heed what ye do, for before his judgment-seat ye shall all be brought."

CHAIRMAN. "This is canting."

GEORGE FOX. "If to confess Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and to obey his command, be called canting by a judge of a court, it is to little purpose for me to say more among you; yet ye shall see that I am a Christian, and shall show forth Christianity, and my innocency shall be manifest."

Upon this the jailer led him out of court, and the crowds in attendance were so affected by the integrity and dignity of his character, that they treated him with marked respect. "The people," he says, "were generally tender as if they had been in a meeting."

Soon after, he was again called into court, and the jury found a verdict against him, which he traversed. He was then required to give bail until the next sessions, and the jailer's son offered to be his surety. He declined, however, on the same grounds as stated on a former occasion, and the chairman sent him to prison. He had not remained there more than two hours, when some of the other justices, who were more moderate, procured his liberation, on his promising to appear at the next Quarter Sessions.

As soon as he could procure a copy of the indictment, he proceeded to London, visiting Friends as he went. Here some of his friends, who were earnest to rescue him out of the hands of his persecutors, procured a writ of Habeas Corpus, to bring him again before the judges of the King's Bench; but the case had proceeded so far, that they would not interfere, and he was left to appear at the next Quarter Sessions at Worcester. "While in London," he says, "the Yearly Meeting of Friends came on, at which I was present; and exceeding glorious the meetings were, beyond expression; blessed be the Lord!"

When the sessions came on at Worcester, in the 5th month (July,) he appeared according to promise, and being called to the bar, the indictment was read, but some scruples arising among the jury concerning it, the chairman, Justice Street, immediately caused the oath to be tendered to him again.

GEORGE FOX. "I come now to try the traverse of my indictment, and thy tendering the oaths to me again is a new snare. I desire thee to tell me whether the oaths are to be tendered to the king's subjects, or to the subjects of foreign princes?"

CHAIRMAN. "To the subjects of this realm."

GEORGE FOX. "You have not named me subject in the indictment, and therefore have not brought me within the statute."

CHAIRMAN, (to the clerk,) "Read the oath to him."

GEORGE FOX. "I require justice. I wish to know whether the sessions ought not to have been holden for the king and the body of the county?"

CHAIRMAN. "Yes."

GEORGE FOX. "Then you have left the king out of the indictment; how then can you proceed upon this indictment to a trial between the king and me, seeing the king is left out?"

CHAIRMAN. "The king was in before."

GEORGE FOX. "But the king's name being left out here,

is a great error in the indictment, and sufficient, as I am informed, to quash it. Besides, I was committed by the name of George Fox of London; but now I am indicted by the name of George Fox of Tredington, in the county of Worcester. I therefore wish the jury to consider, how they can find me guilty upon that indictment, seeing I am not of the place the indictment mentions?"

CHAIRMAN. "There certainly are errors in the indictment; but you may take your remedy in its proper place."

GEORGE FOX. "You know that we are a people that suffer all things, and bear all things; and therefore ye use us thus, because we cannot revenge ourselves; but we leave our cause to the Lord."

CHAIRMAN. "The oath hath been tendered to you several times, and we will have some satisfaction from you concerning the oath."

GEORGE FOX. "I offer the same declaration instead of the oath, which I offered to the judges before. But seeing ye put the oath anew to me, I desire to know whether the indictment is quashed or not?"

The Chairman, not regarding this question, told the jury, "They might go out." Some of them expressed themselves dissatisfied, and the judge told them, "They had heard a man swear that the oath was tendered to him the last sessions;" and he directed them how they should find.

GEORGE FOX. "Thou shouldst leave the jury to their own consciences."

After they had found a verdict of "Guilty," George Fox said to them, "How can ye satisfy yourselves to find me guilty upon that indictment, which is laid so false, and has so many errors in it?" They could make but little answer, he says; "yet one, who seemed to be the worst of them, would have taken me by the hand; but I put him by, saying, 'How now, Judas, hast thou betrayed me, and dost thou now come with a kiss?' So I bid both him and the rest repent."

CHAIRMAN. "I wish you to consider, Mr. Fox, how favourable the court has been to you."

GEORGE FOX. "How canst thou say so? Was ever a man worse dealt by than I have been in this case, who was stopped in my journey, when travelling upon my lawful occasions, and imprisoned without a cause; and now have had oaths put to me only for a snare? I desire thou wouldst answer me in the presence of the Lord, in whose presence we all are, whether this oath is not tendered to me in envy?"

CHAIRMAN. "Would you had never come here, to trouble us and the county."

GEORGE FOX. "I came not hither of myself, but was brought, being stopped in my journey. I have not troubled you, but ye have brought trouble upon yourselves."

CHAIRMAN. "Well, the sentence which I have to pass is a very sad one."

GEORGE FOX. "I wish to know, whether what thou art going to say is by way of passing sentence, or for information; for I have many things to say, and more errors to assign in the indictment besides those I have already mentioned, to stop thee from giving sentence against me upon that indictment."

CHAIRMAN. "I am going to show you the danger of a premunire, which is loss of your liberty, and of all your goods and chattels, and to suffer imprisonment during life. But I do not deliver this as the sentence of the court upon you, but as an admonition. Take him away, jailer."

"I expected to have been called again to hear sentence, but when I was gone out of the court, the clerk of the peace (whose name was Twitty) asked the chairman, as I was informed, 'whether that which he had spoken to me should stand for sentence?' And he, consulting with some of the justices, told him, 'Yes, that was the sentence, and should stand.' This was done behind my back, to save himself from shame in the face of the country. Many of the justices, and the generality of the people, were moderate and civil; and John Ashly, a lawyer, was friendly to me, both the time before and now, speaking on my behalf, and pleading the errors of the indictment for me; but Justice Street, the judge of the court, would not regard them, but overruled all."

Being now returned to prison under sentence of premunire, his wife came from Swarthmore to be with him, and at the next assizes, she and Thomas Lower delivered to Judge Wilde a statement of his case, showing the proceedings throughout, and the errors of the indictment. The judge told them they might, if they thought proper, try the errors in the indictment, but he gave them very little encouragement.

While confined in prison, George Fox was taken with severe illness, which brought him so low that some of his friends doubted his recovery; but he was sweetly comforted and sustained by the heartfelt assurance of divine love, and was led to believe that "the Lord had yet more work for him to do, before he took him to himself." On account of his illness, Justice Parker was induced, through the importunity of his friends, to grant him some indulgence; and in the meantime, no efforts were spared by William Penn and other Friends in London, to obtain his enlargement. A free pardon was offered, but this he declined, on the ground that its acceptance might be construed to imply an acknowledgment of his guilt, saying, "I had rather lie in prison all my days, than to come out in any way dishonourable to Truth." His wife repaired to London, and laid his case before the king, who spoke kindly to her, and referred her to the lord-keeper, but this functionary assured her that "the king could not release him otherwise than by a pardon."

During the progress of these measures, William Penn wrote two letters to George Fox, showing the exertions they were making for his release.* "The king," he says, "knows not that thou refusest a pardon, only that we choose rather a more clear and suitable way to thy innocency. I am, and intend, to stay in town, to do my utmost. The Lord knows I would come in thy place to release thee; but the Lord's will be done.

"Dear George, things are pretty quiet, and meetings very full, and precious and living, blessed be the Lord God forever!"

* See Barclay's Letters of Early Friends; Friends' Lib. XI. 385; and Janney's Life of Penn, chap. VII.

A writ of habeas corpus being obtained, George Fox was once more removed from Worcester, and brought before the court of the king's bench, Sir Matthew Hale presiding.

The trial took place the 11th of 12th month, 1674, [February, O. S. 1675.] Thomas Corbett, an eminent counsellor, being employed to plead for him, took new and original ground. He told the judges, that "They could not imprison on a premunire." Upon which, Chief Justice Hale said, "Mr. Corbett, you should have come sooner, at the beginning of the term, with this plea." He answered, "We could not get a copy of the return and the indictment." The judge replied, "You should have told us, and we would have forced them to make a return sooner." Then said Judge Wilde, "Mr. Corbett, you go upon general terms; and if it be so, as you say, we have committed many errors at the Old Bailey and in other courts." Corbett was positive, that by law, they could not imprison upon premunire. The judge said, "There is summons in the statute." "Yes," said Corbett, "but summons is not imprisonment, for summons is in order to a trial." "Well," said the judge, "we must have time to look at our books, and consult the statutes." So the hearing was put off till the next day.

On the ensuing day they concluded to waive this plea, and to begin with the errors in the indictment, which, when examined, proved to be so many and so gross, that the judges were all of opinion it should be quashed, and the prisoner set at liberty. Some of the enemies of George Fox moved the court, that the oaths should again be tendered to him, alleging, "That he was a dangerous man to be at liberty." But Judge Hale said, "He had indeed heard some such reports, but he had also heard many more good reports of him." He was then freed by proclamation.

Thus, after an imprisonment of nearly fourteen months, he was set at liberty, which he ascribed to Divine goodness, saying, "The Lord's everlasting power went over all to his glory and praise."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Residence of George Fox at Swarthmore—Epistle to Friends—Separation of Wilkinson and Story—Charges against them—George Fox resumes his travels—Letter to his wife—Testimony against tithes—Yearly meeting of London — Visit to William Penn — Answer to Roger Williams—Account of Robert Barclay—Visit to Holland—Yearly meeting of Amsterdam — Princess Elizabeth Palatine — Letter to Friends in Dantzic—Return to England.

1675–7.

On being liberated from his fifth and last imprisonment, George Fox remained in London and its vicinity until after the yearly meeting of Friends, which took place in the early part of the fourth month, 1675. He then proceeded to Swarthmore-hall in Lancashire, and being unable to ride on horseback, by reason of his late sickness and long confinement in prison, he went in a coach with his wife and her daughter Susan.

Swarthmore-hall, once the residence of Judge Fell and afterwards of George and Margaret Fox, was a large, substantial mansion, built of stone. Its situation has been described as somewhat singular, and picturesque.* Eastward of it, to the bay of Morecambe, extended a rich and beautiful champaign country, a large part of which was included in the Swarthmore estate. Westward lay the bleak and barren tract of Swarthmoor, partially screened from view, by an ancient grove of forest trees. Northward might be discerned the town of Ulverstone, and beyond, the pointed mountains of Coniston, and the Lake district.

At this beautiful estate, George Fox now remained a year and nine months, in order to recruit his impaired health, and this appears to have been the first season of repose he had allowed himself for a period of more than thirty years. But

* Armistead's Select Miscellanies, II. 139.

while enjoying the comforts of home in the bosom of his family, he did not suffer the time to pass unimproved; for, in addition to the regular attendance of meetings, and frequent interviews with Friends from a distance who sought his counsel, he wrote much for publication, concerning the doctrines and discipline of the church. From his general epistle read at the yearly meeting of London, the 17th of the 3d month 1676, the following passage is selected:

"Now, Friends, you that have been ancient labourers, and have known the dealings of the Lord these twenty years, (more or less) as I have often said to you, draw up what you can of that which the Lord hath carried you through by his power, the passages and sufferings, and how by the Lord ye have been supported from the first; so that he may be exalted by his power now, and in ages to come, who hath been the only support, defence, and stay of his people all along, over all to himself; to whom be all glory and praise forever and ever, amen. He deserves it in his church throughout all ages, from his living members, who return the praise to the living God, who reigns over all, blessed forever." . . . . "Therefore let there be no boasting, but in the Lord, in his power and kingdom; that keeps all in humility." . . . .

Another of his epistles, addressed to Friends, was intended to warn them against a "spirit of separation" which had made its appearance in some members of the Society, who were endeavouring to lay waste the order of the discipline. This contentious spirit, which for some years disturbed the meetings of Friends, originated with two ministers of the Society, John Wilkinson and John Story, who manifested great opposition to meetings for discipline; the institution of which, they said, was following the prescriptions of men, and "setting up another government than that of the spirit." Against women's meetings for discipline, more especially, was their rancour exhibited; and as George Fox had been the instrument through whom these meetings were established, they

evinced their dislike to him by false accusations.* They also discouraged the testimony of Friends against the payment of tithes, and were opposed to recording the condemnations or acknowledgments of those who had been guilty of immoral conduct. Another cause of dissatisfaction is worthy of note, as throwing some light upon the state of Friends' meetings at that early date. Wilkinson and Story, it is said, "had disorderly and irreverently judged Friends' tender exercises in breaking forth in melodious singings and soundings to God's praise, in their meetings, under the exercise of the power which breaks and fills the heart, out of the abundance whereof break forth sighs, groans, and spiritual songs, as the Lord is pleased to exercise them that wait upon him."†

An instance of this spontaneous outburst of religious feeling, is mentioned in the Journal of George Fox. It occurred during his visit to Ireland, and has been referred to in the XXth chapter of this work.

In order to reclaim Wilkinson and Story, with their adherents, and to restore the unity of the body, great efforts were made, and long forbearance exercised, by George Fox and his friends, who retained the confidence and love of the great body of the Society. There was, however, a schism effected, and within the limits of Westmoreland Quarterly Meeting, separate meetings were established, composed of those who were not willing to submit to the restraints of discipline. In order to compose this difference, a conference was appointed to he held at Drawell, in Sedburgh parish, Yorkshire, in the second month, 1676, which continued four days, and was attended by some of the most eminent ministers of the Society. Wilkinson and Story, with many of their adherents, being present, were so wrought upon by the power of divine truth, that they gave, in writing, a partial acknowledg-

* Anti-Christian Treachery discovered, and its way blocked up, by Joseph Blaykling and others. London, 1686: pp. 30, 57, 121.

† Ibid, p. 45, 88.

ment of the error into which they had fallen, through weakness in the hour of temptation.

The Friends in attendance from other parts of the nation, among whom was William Penn, drew up a narrative of the proceedings, in which, after alluding to the acknowledgment signed by Wilkinson and Story, they express a hope that more complete satisfaction will be given, and then, in conclusion, hand forth the following salutary advice: "And now, Friends in God's love, we desire you to suppress all papers of controversy relating to this difference, that the minds of Friends be not further troubled, nor any defiled, nor this controversy kept any longer alive; but that all may sink down into the simple truth, and in that feel the pure and sweet union which, being lived in, preserves out of those doubts, distrusts, jealousies, carnal reasonings, and evil watchings, that harm the immortal soul; and in that pure fellowship all are cheerful, tender, and open-hearted, full of love and brotherly kindness, watching over one another for good, in which the Lord God Almighty establish us forever. And we do hereby warn all, to have a care that they be not lifted up by reason of the temptation and hurt that is come upon these men; nor yet insult over them; for that spirit is not of God; but rather, let all watch, in the fear and dread of Almighty God, against that spirit, that they enter not into temptation."*

Soon after this meeting, Wilkinson and Story, being in a better state of feeling towards George Fox, sought an interview with him at Swarthmore, and were cordially received. He showed them the danger they were in, if they did not return into unity with the body; and he desired them to comply with the advice of Friends, and lay down their separate meetings. It appeared, however, that they were not sufficiently humble to retrace their steps, for their separate meetings were still continued; and at the Yearly Meeting of

* This document is signed by 23 Friends, most of them prominent members. It was probably drafted by William Penn, whose signature is the last. See Anti-Christian Treachery discovered, p. 58.

London, which took place the following month, Friends being under much solicitude on their account, addressed them an affectionate epistle, in which they thus plead with them: "Oh! strive not against your own mercies, neither exclude yourselves from the fellowship of your brethren, but judge down all strife, jealousies, and surmises in the name of the living God, that you may be made nigh, and be instruments to bring those nigh that are also with you at a manifest distance from us, otherwise the jealous God will stretch forth his hand against you, and you and this separation will apparently wither and come to nought."*

In the following year (1677,) this separation again claimed the attention of Friends in London, and after the rising of the Yearly Meeting, an epistle signed by more than fifty members, was addressed to the society at large, advising them to give no countenance to the schism, but "to watch in the power of God against this spirit that would make them twain that God hath made one, and separate that which God hath joined together."†

In the early part of the year 1677, George Fox, being somewhat recruited in health and strength, left Swarthmore, to resume his travels in the gospel ministry. His wife and her daughter Rachel accompanied him some days on this journey, attending with much satisfaction the meetings of Friends in Westmoreland, and part of Yorkshire. After they had left him to return home, he continued his journey, accompanied by Leonard Fell; and they passed through the dales of Yorkshire, visiting the meetings where he had so successfully laboured in the early part of his ministry.

Leaving York, he continued his journey by easy stages, visiting meetings in the counties of Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Warwick, Buckingham, Bedford, and Middlesex, until

* Signed by George Whitehead, John Burnyeat, William Gibson, Robert Lodge, Alexander Parker, Thomas Taylor, John Bowren, John Tiffin, William Penn. See Anti-Christian Treachery discovered, p. 61.

† Ibid, p. 77.

he came to London, where he was gladly received by Friends, and they were greatly refreshed together in waiting upon God. Having observed in some places a "slackness in keeping up the ancient testimony of truth against tithes," he wrote an epistle to Friends, exhorting them to stand their ground "against that anti-christian yoke of oppression." "Christ's disciples," he says, "could not join with those who made a trade of preaching." . . . . . "Therefore, in the power of the Lord maintain the war against the beast, and do not put into his mouth, lest he cry peace to you; which peace you must not receive, but it must be broken and thrown out by the Spirit of God."

While in London, he attended the Yearly Meeting of Friends; concerning which he says: "Very glorious meetings we had, wherein the Lord's powerful presence was very largely felt, and the affairs of truth were sweetly carried on in the unity of the spirit, to the satisfaction and comfort of the upright-hearted; blessed be the Lord forever!"

Soon after Yearly Meeting, he went with William Penn to his residence at Worminghurst, forty miles from London. Here he stayed three weeks, and having also the company of his friend, John Burnyeat, they prepared an answer to a book of Roger Williams, of New England, who, it appears, had assailed the doctrines of Friends.

Impelled by a sense of religious duty to "visit Friends in Holland, in order to preach the gospel there, and in some parts of Germany," George Fox took passage in the packet-boat at Harwich, the 25th of the 5th month, 1677. He was accompanied in this visit by several Friends, among whom were William Penn and Robert Barclay. The former of these eminent men is already well known to the public, but a brief notice of the latter may be acceptable to some readers.

Robert Barclay was born at Gordounstown, in Scotland, the 23d of the 10th month, 1648. He was the son of Colonel David Barclay, who had distinguished himself in his military career, and was highly honoured in civil society. On being

convinced of Friends' principles in the year 1666, he was faithful to his convictions of duty; and renouncing the world, he became a valiant soldier in the Lamb's warfare. His son Robert was convinced soon after, being then in his nineteenth year. In his youth he evinced a promising genius, and after passing through the best schools in his native country, was sent to a college in Paris to finish his education. On his return to Scotland, he attended a Friends' meeting, where "he *was reached in the time of silence*" by the power of Divine Truth, and yielded obedience to the heavenly call. "When I came," he says, "into the silent assemblies of God's people, I felt a secret power amongst them which touched my heart; and as I gave way unto it, I found the evil weakening in me, and the good raised up; and so I became thus knit and united unto them, hungering more and more after the increase of this power and life, whereby I might find myself perfectly redeemed." It was not long before he was called to the public ministry, in which he was highly esteemed for his work's sake. George Fox speaks of him as "a wise and faithful minister of Christ, who did good service for the Lord, turning people from darkness to light." He was much engaged in religious controversy, for which he was eminently qualified, being possessed of an acute and vigorous intellect, a good command of language, and a profound acquaintance with ecclesiastical literature.

In the year 1674, he wrote a treatise on church government, originally entitled "Anarchy of the Ranters," in which the society of Friends was "vindicated from those that accuse them of disorder and confusion on the one hand, and from such as calumniated them with tyranny and imposition on the other; showing that the true and pure principles of the gospel are restored by their testimony." This treatise has ever been held in high esteem among Friends, and has passed through many editions. But his most celebrated and valuable work is his "Apology for the true Christian Divinity; being an explanation and vindication of the Principles and Doctrines of

the people called Quakers." Although written in the 28th year of his age, it is a master-piece of its kind; being replete with cogent arguments, and clear illustrations of Christian doctrine.

On the arrival of George Fox and his companions in Holland, they had large and satisfactory meetings. At Rotterdam and Harlem, the truths of the gospel were freely declared, and well received. At Amsterdam they attended a Quarterly Meeting, in which Fox and Penn were led "to open many things concerning the order of the gospel, and to show the benefit and service of Yearly, Quarterly, and Monthly Meetings of men and women." It was then agreed that a Yearly Meeting should be held at Amsterdam, "for Friends in all the United Provinces of Holland, in Embden, the Palatinate, Hamburg, Frederickstadt, Dantzic, and other places in Germany."

While at Amsterdam, George Fox, being under a religious exercise of mind concerning the schism, already alluded to, among the Friends in England, wrote them a letter of exhortation, advising them to keep in the peaceable spirit of the Lamb, which will wear out all contention, and give the victory over that earthly spirit which leads to separation and strife.

He also addressed a letter to Elizabeth, the Princess Palatine, who ruled over a small territory in Westphalia, and held her court at Hertforden, in the county of Ravensburg.

This princess was the grand-daughter of James the First, of England; and was no less distinguished for her learning and piety, than for her exalted rank.* She had been visited by William Penn some years before, and had expressed her concurrence with the doctrines of Friends.

The letter of George Fox was conveyed to the princess by his step-daughter, Isabel Yeomens; and was kindly received, as appears by the following answer:

* For a sketch of her life, see Janney's Life of Penn, chap. ix.

"DEAR FRIEND: I cannot but have a tender love to those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom it is given, not only to believe in him, but to suffer for him; therefore your letter and your friend's visit, have been both very welcome to me. I shall follow their and your counsel, as far as God will afford me light and unction: remaining still

Your loving friend

ELIZABETH."

Hertfort, the 30th of August, 1677.

At Amsterdam, the Friends who came over with George Fox left him for a time, in order to pursue the objects of their mission. William Penn, Robert Barclay and Benjamin Furley, proceeded to Germany, where they travelled many hundred miles in the service of the gospel. George Fox, taking with him John Claus of Amsterdam for interpreter, visited many towns and cities in Holland, Friesland, Groningen, Hanover, and Holstein, in most of which he found some openness for religious service, both in public meetings appointed for worship, and in conversation with persons who appeared to be inquiring after the truth.

At Hamburg, he had "a glorious meeting, in which the Lord's power was exalted over all."

At Frederickstadt, he found a considerable company of Friends, among whom he had a fine refreshing meeting, which caused him to forget the weariness occasioned by his journey thither.

This city being in the dominions of the Duke of Holstein, he would have banished Friends from it, but the magistrates declined to comply with his orders, saying, "They would lay down their offices rather than do it, inasmuch as themselves came to that city, to enjoy the liberty of their consciences."

Before the departure of George Fox from this place, he had another meeting with the Friends alone, to whom he explained the benefits resulting from meetings for discipline, which being in accordance with their own religious convictions, "they readily agreed to have monthly meetings thencefor-

ward amongst themselves, that both men and women might take care of the outward concerns of the church."

On his way back to Hamburg, he inquired at an inn where they lodged, "Whether there were any tender people in the town that feared God, or that had a mind to discourse of the things of God?" But the inn-keeper replied, "There were few such in that town."

This custom of inquiring for serious or religiously inclined, people seems to have been very generally observed by him during his journey, and is in accordance with the command of Christ to his disciples, "Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence."

At Hamburg, he had another good and satisfactory meeting, after which he had some discourse with a Swede, resident there, who was a man of considerable eminence, and had been banished from his own country on account of his religion. Continuing his travels, he passed through Bremen and came to Oldenburg, which had recently been destroyed by fire. He writes in his Journal, "It was a lamentable sight to see so brave a city burnt down. We went to an inn, and, though it was First-day, the soldiers were drinking and playing at shovel-board; and at those few houses that were left, shops were open, and the people trading one with another. I was moved to declare the truth among them, and warn them of the judgments of God; and though they heard me quietly, and were civil towards me, yet I was burthened with their wickedness. Many times in mornings, and at noons and nights, at the inns, and on the ways, as I travelled, I spoke to the people, preaching the truth to them, warning them of the day of the Lord, and exhorting them to turn to the light and spirit of God in themselves, that thereby they might be led out of evil."

At Embden, he had a satisfactory meeting. In this city, Friends had suffered much from persecution, many of them having been frequently banished, and on their return, impris-

oned and despoiled of their goods. At Harlingen, he met with William Penn, who had just returned from his travels in Germany. In this place a number of Friends resided, and at the recommendation of George Fox, a Monthly Meeting was established. "In the afternoon," he writes in his Journal, "we had a public meeting, to which came people of several sorts, Socinians, Baptists, Lutherans, &c., amongst whom were a doctor of physic and a priest. After I had declared the truth pretty largely, opening the happy state that man and woman were in whilst they kept under God's teaching, and abode in paradise, and the woe and misery that came upon them when they went from God's teaching, hearkened to the serpent's, transgressed God's command, and were driven out of the paradise of God; and set forth the way whereby man and woman might come into that happy state again: the priest, an ancient, grave man, stood up just as I had done speaking, and, putting off his hat, said, 'I pray God to prosper and confirm that doctrine, for it is truth, and I have nothing against it.'"

After this meeting, William Penn set out to visit some other parts of Germany, and George Fox proceeded to Amsterdam, where he attended several meetings, which were large, and eminently favoured with divine life and power. While in this city, he wrote an epistle to the Friends at Dantzick, who were suffering under grievous persecution. In this letter he says, "I am glad the Lord hath witnesses in that city, to stand for his glory and name, and for Christ Jesus, the great prophet whom God hath raised up, who is to be heard in all things; so ye need none of the prophets which men have raised up." . . . . "I do believe that your imprisonments and sufferings in that place will be for good in the end, (as it hath been in other places,) ye standing faithful to the Lord, who is all-sufficient. For your sufferings and trials will try their teachers and religions, churches and worship, and make manifest what birth they are of; even that which persecutes him that is born of the spirit; for ye know that there is no salvation

by any other name under the whole heaven, but by the name of Jesus; therefore it is time to leave them when there is no salvation by or in any of them." . . . . . "So let all your minds be bended with the Lord's power, to spread his truth abroad; and where ye hear of any, or have any correspondence in trading with any sober people, far or near, send them books, that their understandings may be opened after the Lord. The Lord God Almighty preserve you!" . . . .

During his stay in Amsterdam, a public fast was proclaimed, which occurring on the same day of the week that Friends usually met for public worship, a great concourse attended their meeting, to whom he opened the nature of the true fast, showing "that it is to fast from sin and iniquity, from strife and debate, from violence and oppression, and to abstain from every appearance of evil." He employed much of his time, while in this city, in writing tracts and epistles concerning the principles of Friends.

At length, William Penn having returned from Germany, they set out together, and passing through Leyden, came to the Hague, where the Prince of Orange kept his court. Here they visited one of the judges, with whom they had much discourse on religious subjects, which appeared to be mutually satisfactory. They next came to Rotterdam, where they had several meetings, and then, believing their service in Holland was accomplished, they proceeded to the Briel, and took passage for England.

They had a long and hazardous voyage; the weather being tempestuous, and the vessel so leaky that two pumps were kept at work day and night. George Fox observes, in his Journal, that "The Lord who is able to make the stormy winds to cease, and the raging waves of the sea to be calm, yea, to raise them and stop them at his pleasure, he alone did preserve us; praised be his name forever! Though our passage was hard, yet we had a fine time, and good service for truth on board, among the passengers, some of whom were great folks, and were very kind and loving. We arrived at

Harwich the 23d of the 8th month, at night, having been two nights and almost three days at sea."

After attending a meeting at Harwich, he proceeded to Colchester, travelling in a Friend's wagon, well bedded with straw. In Colchester he stayed over First-day; and Friends flocking in from the country around, they had a meeting of about a thousand persons. Proceeding on his way, and holding meetings, he came to London, where he attended Grace-church street meeting, in which the Lord's refreshing presence was felt, and they rejoiced together, ascribing praises to him who alone is worthy.

CHAPTER XXV.

George Fox meets the adherents of Wilkinson and Story—Visits Isaac Penington — Death of Isaac Penington — Yearly Meeting, 1678—Letter of George Fox to his wife—Letter to Friends against schism—Return to Swarthmore—Epistle to Friends—Yearly meeting, 1680—Visit to Friends' schools — Sufferings and constancy of Friends — George Fox prosecuted for tithes at Swarthmore—Advice on choosing sheriffs — Disturbance at Grace-church street meeting— At Devonshire house, &c.—Yearly Meetings, 1683 '4—Redemption of Algerine captives—Visit to Holland.

1677–84.

After the return of George Fox from his first religious visit to Holland, he remained some weeks in London, attending meetings, and assisting Friends to obtain relief for their suffering brethren.

He then proceeded to Buckinghamshire, and visited the meetings of Friends, at some of which those who favoured the views of Wilkinson and Story were exceedingly troublesome. He admonished them to be quiet, and not to disturb the meeting, offering to hold a meeting for them on another day, in order to hear their objections. This proposition being

agreed to, a conference was appointed to be held at Thomas Ellwood's, the following week. It was held accordingly, when so large a company attended, that the house would not contain them, and they occupied the barn as their place of meeting. After an interval of silence, the disaffected members commenced their attack, most of their arrows being aimed at George Fox, but he was enabled to answer their objections, and to refute their slanders. It proved to be a serviceable meeting, in which that disorganizing spirit was rebuked; the weak were strengthened, the wavering confirmed, and the minds of faithful Friends refreshed with a renewed evidence of heavenly love.

At Bristol he had many precious meetings at the time of the fair. Concerning these meetings, he writes in his Journal, "Great was the love and unity of Friends that abode faithful in the truth, though some who were gone out of the holy unity, and were run into strife, division, and enmity, were rude and abusive, and behaved themselves in a very unchristian manner towards me. But the Lord's power was over all; by which, being preserved in the heavenly patience which can bear injuries for his name's sake, I felt dominion therein over the rough, rude, and unruly spirits; and left them to the Lord, who knew my innocency, and would plead my cause. The more these laboured to reproach and vilify me, the more did the love of Friends, that were sincere and upright-hearted, abound towards me; and some that had been betrayed by the adversaries, seeing their envy and rude behaviour, broke off from them; who have cause to bless the Lord for their deliverance."

He continued travelling in the service of the gospel, and passing through the counties of Gloucester and Worcester, he went to Ragley, in Warwickshire, to visit the Countess of Conway, who, he understood, was desirous to see him. He found her in a tender, pious frame of mind, and willing to detain him longer than he felt freedom to stay. Passing through Buckinghamshire, in the spring of 1678, he spent a

few days at Woodside, the residence of his friend Isaac Penington. This excellent man had been a great sufferer for conscience' sake, having been six times imprisoned, during which his health was impaired by long confinement in the damp, unwholesome cells of Aylesbury jail. He died the following year, at his wife's estate, in Kent, in the 63d year of his age.

From Buckinghamshire, George Fox proceeded to London, where he attended Yearly Meeting, and soon after its close, wrote the following letter to his wife:

"Dear Heart: To whom is my love in the everlasting seed of life, that reigns over all. Great meetings here have been, and the Lord's power hath been stirring through all, the like hath not been. The Lord hath in his power knit Friends wonderfully together, and his glorious presence did appear among Friends. And now the meetings are over (blessed be the Lord) in quietness and peace.

"From Holland I hear that things are well there. Some Friends are gone that way, to be at the yearly meeting at Amsterdam. At Embden, Friends that were banished are got into the city again. At Dantzick, Friends are in prison, and the magistrates threatened them with harder imprisonments; but the next day the Lutherans rose and plucked down or defaced the Popish monastery, so they have work enough themselves. The king of Poland did receive my letter, and read it himself; and Friends have since printed it in High Dutch.

"By letters from the half-yearly meeting in Ireland, I hear they are all in love there. At Barbadoes Friends are in quietness, and their meetings settled in peace.

"At Antigua also, and Nevis, truth prospers, and Friends have their meetings orderly and well. Likewise in New England, and other places, things concerning truth and Friends are well; and in those places the men's and women's meetings are settled; blessed be the Lord! So keep in God's power and seed, that is over all, in whom ye all have life and salva-

tion; for the Lord reigns over all, in his glory, and in his kingdom; glory to his name forever, Amen! So in haste, with my love to you all, and to all Friends.

GEORGE FOX.

"London, 26th of 3d month, 1678."

The sufferings of Friends at this time were very great, there being large numbers imprisoned for attending their meetings, and refusing to swear.

He stayed some weeks in London, endeavouring, but without success, to obtain from Parliament an act for their relief. But that which most grieved him was the conduct of some in that city, as well as in the northern counties, who, professing the principles of Friends, "had gone from the simplicity of the gospel into fleshly liberty," and had openly opposed the order and discipline of the church. Desiring a broader path to walk in, they declaimed against the rules of discipline as the prescriptions of men, and some inexperienced members were in danger of being led away by their plausible reasonings.

In order to inform and strengthen these, George Fox wrote an address to Friends, from which the following passages are selected:

"All that deny prescriptions without distinction, may as well deny all the scriptures, which were given forth by the power and spirit of God. For do they not prescribe how men should walk towards God and man, both in the old testament and in the new? Yea, from the very first promise of Christ in Genesis, what people ought to believe and trust in; and all along, till ye come to the prophets?

"Did not the Lord prescribe to his people by the fathers, and then by his prophets? Did he not prescribe to the people how they should walk, though they turned against the prophets in the old covenant for declaring or prescribing to them the way how they might walk to please God, and keep in favour with him? In the days of Christ, did he not prescribe and teach how people should walk and believe? and after him, did not the apostles prescribe unto people how they

might come to believe, and receive the gospel and the kingdom of God, directing unto that which would give them the knowledge of God, and how they should walk in the new covenant in the days of the gospel, and by what way they should come to the holy city? And did not the apostles send forth their decrees by faithful chosen men (that had hazarded their lives for Christ's sake) to the churches, by which they were established? So you, that deny prescriptions given forth by the power and spirit of God, do thereby oppose the spirit that gave them forth in all the holy men of God. Were there not some all along in the days of Moses, in the days of the prophets, in the days of Christ, and in the days of his apostles, who did withstand that which they gave forth from the spirit of God? And hath there not been the like since the days of the apostles?" . . . . . "See what liberty they pleaded for and ran into in the apostles' days, who could not abide the cross, the yoke of Jesus. We see the same rough and high spirit cries now for liberty (which the power and spirit of Christ cannot give) and cries, 'imposition,' yet is imposing; cries, 'liberty of conscience,' and yet is opposing liberty of conscience; cries against prescriptions, and yet is prescribing both in words and writing. So with the everlasting power and spirit of God this spirit is fathomed, its rise, beginning, and end; and it is judged." . . . . .

The schism which had taken place among Friends in the north of England, and had spread to some other places, appears to have affected but a small portion of the Society, and the separate meetings to which it gave rise did not long continue. "They wasted away," says the historian Sewel, "like snow in the fields, for the best among them came in time to see that they had been deceived, and the less honest grew worse, for among themselves they were not free from divisions."

Leaving London, George Fox travelled through several counties, holding many precious meetings on his way, and reached Swarthmore in the 7th month, 1678. It being their

usual meeting day when he arrived, he "had a sweet opportunity with Friends, their hearts being opened in the love of God, and his blessed life flowing amongst them." Here he remained with his wife and family about eighteen months, during which time he was much occupied in writing tracts and letters on religious subjects; for whether at home or abroad, his mind was constantly engaged in endeavours to promote the great cause of righteousness and truth.

Among his epistles written at this time, one was addressed to Friends in general, exhorting them to hold their meetings in the power of God, and to preserve the unity of the spirit, which is the bond of peace. Another was to those who were in prison for conscience' sake, to whom he held forth the language of sympathy and encouragement; and a third was to the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in London in 1679, from which the following passages are selected:

. . . "And now, my dear friends, the Lord doth require more of you than he doth of other people, because he hath committed more to you. He requires the fruits of his spirit, of the light, of the gospel, of the grace, and of the truth; for herein is he glorified (as Christ said) in your bringing forth much fruit,—fruits of righteousness, holiness, godliness, virtue, truth, and purity; so that ye may answer that which is of God in all people. Be valiant for his everlasting, glorious gospel, in God's holy spirit and truth, keeping in the unity and in the holy spirit, light, and life, which is over death and darkness, and was before death and darkness were. In this spirit we have the bond of peace, which cannot be broken except ye go from the spirit, and then ye lose this unity and bond of peace, which ye have from the Prince of Peace.

"The world also expects more from Friends than from other people, because you profess more. Therefore, you should be more just than others in your words and dealings,—more righteous, holy, and pure in your lives and conversation, so that your lives and conversations may preach. For the world's tongues and mouths have preached long enough; but

their lives and conversations have denied what their tongues have professed and declared.

"And, dear Friends, strive to excel one another in virtue, that ye may grow in love, that excellent way which unites all to Christ and God. Stand up for God's glory, and mind that which concerns the Lord's honour, that in no wise his power may be abused, nor his name evil spoken of by any evil talkers or walkers; but that in all things God may be honoured, and ye may glorify him in your bodies, souls, and spirits, the little time ye have to live.

"My love to you all in the holy seed of life, that reigns over all, and is the first and last in whom ye all have life and salvation, and your election and peace with God through Jesus Christ, who destroys him that hath been betwixt you and God; so that nothing may be betwixt you and the Lord but Christ Jesus. Amen. . . . . .

GEORGE FOX."

In the spring of 1680, he left Swarthmore for the last time, and travelling by easy stages, he visited meetings on his way until he came to London, just before the assembling of the Yearly Meeting.

Concerning this annual solemnity he says, "Many Friends came out of most parts of the nation, and a blessed opportunity the Lord gave us together, wherein the ancient love was sweetly felt, and the heavenly life flowed abundantly over all."

After a stay of some weeks in the city, he was led by a sense of religious duty to attend various meetings in the country, and he then visited two schools for Friends' children, which he had been instrumental in promoting. One of these was at Shackelwel for the education of girls, and the other, for boys, was kept by Christopher Taylor at Edmonton.

During the following winter he remained at London, where he found much to claim his attention relating to the affairs of the church.

It was a time of severe persecution under the conventicle act; the meetings of Friends were frequently broken up by constables and soldiers led by greedy informers, who sought the rewards which the law offered to their cupidity.

These violent proceedings were instigated by the clergy of the established church, who were determined to vanquish the dissenters; and had indeed succeeded in driving them all from the regular attendance of their meetings, except the Friends, who still persevered in openly assembling for the worship of God. Although thousands had been imprisoned, those who remained at liberty still attended their meetings. When their houses of worship were closed against them, they met in the street adjacent; when torn down, they met near the ruins; when the men and women were in prison, even the children kept up their meetings.

Such heroic courage, combined with christian meekness, has seldom been witnessed in any age or country, and the effect was to spread their principles more rapidly than any other means that could have been devised.

George Fox was earnest and diligent in his endeavours to mitigate the sufferings of Friends; by visiting them in prison, attending to the wants of their families, writing letters of encouragement to those confined in distant places, and pleading their cause with men in authority. Nor did he shrink from the exposure of himself; but was always foremost at the post of danger, attending the meetings where most disturbance was expected; and yet while in London, during the hottest season of persecution, he was not imprisoned, which he attributed to the protecting arm of Divine goodness.

In the early part of the year 1681, he was prosecuted in London, for the small tithes on his wife's estate at Swarthmore.

The suit was commenced at Lancaster, but they demurred to the jurisdiction of the court, and it was removed to the Exchequer court at Westminster, where an order was obtained to take him and his wife into custody. This was a little

before the Yearly Meeting, at which time it was thought they would take him, but he was permitted to attend without molestation.

When the meeting was ended, understanding that a writ had been issued against him, he took with him his son-in-law William Mead, and called on several of the judges, to whom he represented, "That his wife had lived three and forty years at Swarthmore, and in all that time there had been no tithe paid or demanded; and, moreover, an old man, who had long been a tithe-gatherer, had made affidavit that he never gathered tithe at Swarthmore-hall in Judge Fell's time nor since." Then he stated the case of "eight poor men brought up to London out of the north, about 200 miles, for small tithes; one of them had no family but his wife, and kept no living creature but a cat."

He asked one of the judges, "Whether they could take a man and his wife and imprison them both for small tithes, and so destroy a family?" He answered that "It was a hard case." A few days after, those eight poor friends appeared before the court, but they were not committed to prison.

The case of George Fox and his wife was postponed till the next term, when it was brought before the court, and William Mead told the judges "that George Fox had, before marriage, engaged himself not to meddle with his wife's estate," which they could scarcely believe until the writings were shown them. Upon this, two of the judges and some of the lawyers pleaded, that he was not liable for the tithes, but the other two judges were urgent "to have him sequestered, alleging that he was a public man."

Accordingly, a sequestration against him and his wife was ordered, but their counsel moved for a "limitation," that the plaintiff should take no more than was proved, which being granted, in a great measure defeated their adversary's design.

In the year 1682, George Fox, being in London just before the time of an election for sheriffs, wrote a few lines, addressed

to the candidates who had solicited the suffrages of Friends. He queries with them, whether they are "against persecuting people for their religion, and for the worship of God in spirit and in truth," and he adds, "Will you not force us to swear? will you not force us to give tithes and maintenance to such teachers as we know God hath not sent? Shall we be free to serve and worship God, and keep his and his Son's commands, if we give our voices freely for you? For we are unwilling to give our voices for such as will imprison and persecute us, and spoil our goods."

Having observed that there was much excitement among the people on account of the election, he wrote as follows:

"To the people who are choosing sheriffs in London:

"PEOPLE: — All keep in the gentle and peaceable wisdom of God, which is above that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish; and live in that love of God that is not puffed up, nor is unseemly; which envieth not, but beareth and endureth all things. In this love, ye will seek the good and peace of all men, and the hurt of no man. Keep out of all heats, be not hot-headed; but be cool and gentle, that your christian moderation may appear to all men; for the Lord is at hand, who beholds all men's words, thoughts, and actions, and will reward every one according to their work; what every man soweth, that shall he reap."

About this time he felt some inclination to go into the country, but hearing that there would be a disturbance of their meetings, he concluded to stay over First-day; when he attended Grace-church street meeting. "William Penn," he says, "went with me, and spoke in the meeting. While he was declaring truth, a constable came in with his great staff, and bade him give over, and come down; but William Penn held on, declaring truth in the power of God. After a while the constable drew back; and when William Penn had done, I stood up, and declared to the people the everlasting gospel which was preached in the apostles' days, and to Abraham;

which the church in the apostles' days did receive, and came to be heirs of. This gospel, I declared, was sent from heaven, by the Holy Ghost, in the apostles' days, and is so now; and was not of man, neither by man, but by the revelation of the Holy Ghost." . . . . . "As I was thus speaking, two constables came in with their great staves, and bade me 'give over speaking, and come down.' But I, feeling the power of the Lord with me, spoke on therein, both to the constables and to the people. To the constables I declared, 'That we were a peaceable people, who meet to wait upon God, and worship him in spirit and in truth; and therefore they needed not to have come with their staves against us, who were met in a peaceable manner, desiring and seeking the good and salvation of all people.'" . . . . . "When I had done speaking, I kneeled down and prayed, desiring the Lord to open the eyes and hearts of all people, high and low, that their minds might be turned to God by his Holy Spirit; that he might be glorified in all and over all. After prayer, the meeting rose, and Friends passed away, the constables being come in again without the soldiers, and indeed, both they and the soldiers carried themselves civilly. William Penn and I went into a room hard by, as we used to do, and many Friends went with us; and lest the constables should think we would shun them, a Friend went down and told them, if they would have anything with us, they might come where we were, if they pleased. One of them came to us soon after, but without his staff, which he chose to do that he might not be observed, for he said, 'The people told him he busied himself more than he needed.' The Friends desired to see his warrant, by which they discovered that the informer was one Hilton, a reputed Papist. They asked the constable, 'Whether he could arrest them on that day, which, in law, is called the Lord's day?' He said, 'He thought he could not;' and he told them, 'He had charged the informer to come along with him to the meeting, but he had run away from him.'" On observing that the constable was a man of kind feelings, the Friends

became solicitous that he should not suffer by his lenity towards them, and told him they would meet him again, if he would set an hour. He appointed five in the afternoon; but he neither came nor sent for them. Thus they escaped, with thankful hearts, and acknowledged that 'the Lord's power was over all.'"

During the years 1682 and '83, the Friends in London were frequently kept out of their meeting-houses, by order of the magistrates. On one occasion, George Fox going early to Devonshire house, got into the yard before the soldiers came who were to guard the passages; but he found the constables standing in the door-way with their staves.

He asked them to let him go in; they said, "They durst not, for they were commanded to the contrary, and were sorry for it." He told them "He would not press upon them;" so he stood by the door, and they were very civil. When he became weary with standing, some one gave him a stool, and he sat down. After a while, a Friend rose to speak, and the constables soon forbade him, but he persisting, they became angry. Upon this, George Fox laid his hand gently upon one of the constables, and desired them to let him alone, which they did. After the Friend had ceased, George rose and said; "You need not come against us with swords and staves, for we are a peaceable people, and have nothing in our hearts but good-will to the king and magistrates, and to all the people upon the earth. We do not meet, under pretence of religion, to plot against the government, or to raise insurrections, but to worship God in spirit and in truth. We have Christ for our Bishop, Priest, and Shepherd, to feed us and oversee us. He rules in our hearts, and we can sit in silence, enjoying our teacher."

He then sat down, after having recommended them to Christ, "the shepherd and bishop of souls." Being moved to pray, he knelt down, and "the power of the Lord was over all;" the people, with the constables and soldiers, put off their hats, and one of the officers desired the Lord to bless them.

About the same period, he visited the meeting called "Bull and mouth," where Friends, being kept out by the constables, met in the street, and he was suffered to speak to the assembled crowd without interruption.

At Grace-church street, the First-day following, he found the passages leadiug to the meeting-house guarded, so as to prevent their access, and Friends being met in the street, he stood upon a chair, and spoke largely to the people, "opening the principles of truth to them, and declaring many weighty truths concerning magistracy and the Lord's prayer." "There was," he says, "besides Friends, a great multitude of people, and all was very quiet; for the Lord was over all, and in his time we broke up our meeting, and departed in peace."

At the Yearly Meeting in 1683, he was under much solicitude lest the Friends in attendance from the country should be taken and imprisoned at London; but, through Divine favour, they were preserved, and the meeting was a season of spiritual refreshment. As it was a time of great persecution, and Friends throughout the country were subjected to imprisonment and the spoiling of their goods, he was deeply concerned, "lest any Friends, and especially traders and dealers, should hazard the losing of other men's goods or estates through their sufferings." He therefore addressed to Friends throughout the nation the following epistle, which is characteristic of his sound judgment and practical piety:

"Dear Friends and Brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is your only sanctuary in this day of storm and persecution, spoiling of goods and imprisonment! Let every one's eye be unto him who has all power in heaven and earth given unto him; so that none can touch an hair of your head, nor you, nor anything ye have, except it be permitted or suffered in this day to try his people, whether their minds be with the Lord or in outward things.

"Dear Friends, take care that all your offerings be free, and of your own, that has cost you something; so that ye may not offer of that which is another man's, or that which

ye are intrusted withal, (and not your own,) or fatherless' or widows' estates; but all such things settle and establish in their places. You may remember, many years ago, in a time of great persecution, divers Friends, who were traders, shopkeepers, and others, had the concerns of widows and fatherless, and other people's estates, in their hands. And when a great suffering, persecution, and spoiling of goods came upon Friends, especial care was taken that all might offer up to the Lord, in their sufferings, what was really their own, and not any other people's estates or goods which they had in their hands; and that they might not offer up another body's, but that which they had bought and paid for, or were able to pay for. Afterwards, several letters came out of the country to the meeting at London, from Friends that had goods of the shopkeepers at London, upon credit, which they had not paid for, who wrote to their creditors, intreating them to take their goods again. And some Friends came to London themselves, and treated with their creditors, letting them understand they lay liable to have all they had taken from them, and told them they would not have any man to suffer by them; neither would they, by suffering, offer up anything but what was really their own, or what they were able to pay for. Upon which several took their goods again. This wrought a very good savour in the hearts of many people, when they saw such a righteous, just, and honest principle in Friends, that they would not make any suffer for their testimony; but what they did suffer for the testimony of Jesus, should be really and truly their own, not other people's. In this they owed nothing to any but to love. So in this every man and woman stands in the free offering, a free people, whether it be spiritual or temporal, which is their own; and in that they wrong no man, neither inwardly nor outwardly. . . . .

GEORGE FOX.

"London, 2d of 4th month, 1683."

During the year 1683, he was generally in London and its vicinity, attending the meetings of Friends, encouraging them

to constancy under their sufferings, visiting the prisoners, the sick and the afflicted, and writing letters of advice and consolation. He attended the Yearly Meeting of London in 1684, which he says "was a blessed, weighty meeting, wherein Friends were sweetly refreshed together; for the Lord was with us, and opened his heavenly treasures amongst us."

One of the subjects which engaged the attention of the meeting, was the suffering condition of Friends who were captives at Algiers. "A collection for their redemption was proposed and unanimously agreed upon," and the same was recommended to all the Quarterly Meetings in England and Wales, as also to Friends in Ireland, Scotland, Barbadoes, and Jamaica.*

Soon after the Yearly Meeting he embarked for Holland, being led by a sense of religious duty, to visit some of the meetings of Friends on the continent. He was accompanied by Alexander Parker, George Watts and Nathaniel Brassey, who were under a like religious engagement.

After a good passage they landed at the Brill, and proceeded to Rotterdam, where they had a satisfactory meeting, and George Fox had much discourse with an alderman who called on him, and a burgomaster who invited him to his house. At Amsterdam they attended the Yearly Meeting, which began the 8th of the 4th month, and closed on the 12th.

---

* London Epistle, 1684. By the Yearly Meeting epistles from 1685 to 1702, it appears that continual endeavours were made to ransom their suffering brethren, in captivity at Algiers, and in Morocco; some of whom were convinced of Friends' principles, during their captivity. In the year 1700, the King of England ordered a general collection to be taken up for the ransom of English captives, when Friends informed the government, that they intended to redeem their members at their own charge. The Yearly Meeting recommended, however, that when the collectors came with briefs to Friends' houses, they should "extend their charity in common with their neighbours, towards the redemption of the other English captives." This example is worthy of remembrance in the present day, when so many of our fellow-creatures are still suffering under the rod of oppression.

Here they had an opportunity to see Friends from several provinces, and "They were refreshed together in the love of God."

George Fox in his Journal, thus relates an interview he had with Galenus Abrahams, one of the principal ministers among the Menonites, or Baptists. "I had been with him when I was in Holland about seven years before; and William Penn and George Keith had disputes with him. He was then very high and very shy, so that he would not let me touch him, nor look upon him (by his good-will), but bid me keep my eyes off him; for, he said, 'they pierced him.' But now he was very loving and tender, and confessed in some measure to truth: his wife also, and daughter, were tender and kind, and we parted from them very lovingly."

They extended their travels to Friesland, and then returned to Amsterdam, where they had several large and precious meetings, some of which were attended by persons of rank from Germany. After spending some weeks in this journey, during which they were diligently engaged in holding meetings, and visiting Friends in the love of the gospel, they returned to England, and George Fox went to the house of his son-in-law William Mead in Essex, where he stayed some time to rest and recruit his strength.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Occupation in London—Yearly Meeting, 1685—Death of Charles II.—Accession of James II.—Liberation of 1300 Friends—Yearly Meeting, 1686—Epistle of George Fox to Friends—His Gift of a Meeting-House—King's Declaration of Indulgence—George Fox on Prayer—On the Way to the Kingdom—On Heaven—Accession of William and Mary—Act of Toleration—Yearly Meeting, 1690—Epistle to Friends—Death of George Fox—Death of Margaret Fox.

1684–91.

George Fox was now in his sixty-first year. His intellect was still clear and vigorous; but, from the effect of long imprisonments in damp, unwholesome cells, his constitution was impaired, and his body enfeebled.

Being thus disabled from travelling in the service of the gospel, he generally remained in London and its vicinity, where the concerns of the society he had founded required his attention, and gave rise to an extensive correspondence with Friends throughout the nation, and in foreign lands. Finding, however, that his health suffered from the confined air of the metropolis, he frequently withdrew to the houses of his sons-in-law, John Rouse and William Mead; the former of whom resided at Kingston-upon-Thames, and the latter had a country-seat near Waltham Abbey, in Essex. His wife was required by her maternal duties, to be much at Swarthmore; but there is reason to believe that she was often resident with her daughters near London, where she could enjoy the society of her husband.

In the year 1684, he writes in his Journal, "It was the latter end of the summer when I came to London, where I stayed the winter following; save once or twice, my wife being in town with me, I went with her to her son Rouse's, at Kingston. And though my body was very weak, yet I was in continual service either in public meetings, when I was able

to bear them, or in particular business among Friends, and visiting those that were sufferers for truth, either by imprisonment or loss of goods. Many things also at this time I wrote; some for the press, and some for particular service; as letters to the King of Denmark, and one to the Duke of Holstein on behalf of Friends that were sufferers in his dominions." The latter of these two epistles, after alluding to an attempt made by some evil-minded person to prejudice the duke against Friends, on account of women's preaching, proceeds to show from the scriptures, that there were female preachers in the primitive christian church, and that the prophecy of Joel, quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost, was thereby fulfilled.

Charles II. having died in the winter of 1684–5, his brother, the Duke of York, succeeded him under the title of James II. Soon after the coronation, the Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles II., landed in the west of England, and claimed the throne. An insurrection in his favour took place, but was soon quelled, and the insurgents were punished with a vindictive severity that has seldom been equalled. There being much excitement, and many arrests on account of the insurrection, George Fox was apprehensive that Friends then coming to the Yearly Meeting of London, would be molested on their way. "But," he says, "the Lord, according to his wonted goodness, was graciously pleased to preserve Friends in safety, and gave us a blessed opportunity to meet together in peace and quietness, and accompanied our meetings with his living, refreshing presence: blessed forever be his holy name!"

Considering the disturbed state of the nation, he was led to address a few lines to Friends, "to caution all to keep out of the spirit of the world, in which trouble is, and to dwell in the peaceable truth." From this epistle the following passage is selected:

. . . . "Dear friends and brethren, whatever bustlings and trouble, tumults or outrages, quarrels and strife arise in the

world, keep out of them all; concern not yourselves with them; but keep in the Lord's power and peaceable truth, that is over all such things; in which power ye seek the peace and good of all men. Live in the love which God has shed abroad in your hearts through Christ Jesus; in which love nothing is able to separate you from God and Christ; neither outward sufferings, persecutions, nor anything that is below and without; nor to hinder or break your heavenly fellowship in the light, gospel, and spirit of Christ, nor your holy communion in the Holy Ghost, that proceeds from the Father and the Son, which leads you into all truth." . . . . .

He remained in the city a short time after the Yearly Meeting, when, being exhausted with the heat of the weather, and continual attention to business, he retired to the country. Here a concern attended his mind on account of "the growth and increase of pride, vanity, and excess in apparel," not only in the nation at large, but even among some in membership with Friends. In consideration of this growing evil, he gave forth a paper, showing from the scriptures, that the only true adorning is "that meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price."

On his return to the city, one of the objects that claimed his attention, was the distribution of funds which, he says, "Friends in Ireland had charitably and very liberally raised," for the relief of their brethren who were under suffering for the testimony of a good conscience.

In the spring of 1686, being the second year of his reign, James II. granted a warrant for the liberation of all Friends who were in prison on account of dissent from the worship of the established church, and for refusing to swear.* This warrant, intended to carry out the design of a previous proclamation, was the means of liberating from the prisons of England and Wales upwards of 1300 Friends, some of whom had been

* See warrant in G. Whitehead's Christian Progress, p. 588.

more than twelve years separated from their families and homes.*

The penal laws against non-conformity were, however, still in force, and the informers were still disposed to be busy in their infamous vocation. Application being made to the king to arrest their proceedings, commissioners were appointed to hear the complaint of the Friends, who proved most conclusively that the informers had, in numerous instances, been guilty of perjury and extreme violence, which being reported to the government, directions were given to the judges and magistrates to discountenance their depredations. These humane and judicious measures were believed, by the Friends, to proceed from a sincere desire, on the part of the king, to promote religious toleration; and they were certainly in accordance with declarations he had made prior to his accession to the crown.† His great regard for William Penn, who was an earnest advocate of religious liberty, was undoubtedly an additional motive for extending protection to the persecuted Friends.

At the Yearly Meeting of London, in 1686, many valuable members, whose faces had not been seen there for a long period, being now released from imprisonment, met with their brethren and sisters, and they rejoiced together in the mercies of God. George Fox being solicitous that Friends should not look to man as the source of their deliverance, but should turn their hearts in reverent thankfulness to him who is the Fountain of all good, addressed to them the following epistle:

"FRIENDS: The Lord by his eternal power hath disposed the heart of the king, to open the prison doors, by which about fifteen or sixteen hundred are set at liberty, and hath given a check to the informers, so that in many places our meetings are pretty quiet. My desires are that both liberty and sufferings may be sanctified, to his people; that Friends may prize the mercies

* Gough's History, Book V., chap. III.

† Janney's Life of Penn, chap. VII.

of the Lord in all things, and to him be thankful, who stilleth the raging waves of the sea, allayeth the storms and tempests, and maketh a calm. Therefore, it is good to trust in the Lord, and cast your care upon him, who careth for you. For when ye were in jails and prisons, the Lord did by his eternal arm and power uphold you, and sanctified them to you; unto some he made them a sanctuary, and tried his people as in a furnace of affliction, both in prisons and spoiling of goods. In all this, the Lord was with his people and taught them to know, that 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;' and that he was in all places, 'who crowneth the year with his goodness.' Therefore let all God's people be diligent, and careful to keep the camp of God holy, pure, and clean; and to serve God and Christ, and one another, in the glorious peaceable gospel of life and salvation; which glory shines over God's camp, and his great Prophet, Bishop and Shepherd is among or in the midst of them, exercising his heavenly offices in them: so that you, his people, may rejoice in Christ Jesus, through whom you have peace with God. For he that destroyeth the devil and his works, and bruises the serpent's head, is all God's people's heavenly foundation and rock to build upon; which was the holy prophets' and apostles' rock in days past, and is now the rock of our age, which rock the foundation of God standeth sure.

Upon this the Lord God establish his people. Amen.

GEORGE FOX.

"London, 25th of the 7th month, 1686."

Many other epistles and tracts which he wrote about this time, afford abundant evidence of his humble, watchful frame of mind, his fervent piety, and his high appreciation of the mercies of God through Christ; both in his outward advent as the promised Messiah, and in his inward manifestation as a Spirit of life in the soul. Nor was it only by his written advices and his gospel ministry that George Fox evinced his interest in the flock that he had been instrumental in gather-

ing; he was faithful in the distribution of private charity, and liberal, according to his ability, in acts of public beneficence.

One of his gifts, of a public nature, was for a meeting-house at Swarthmore, as stated in the following grant, viz:—

GEORGE FOX'S DECLARED INTENTION AND MOTION FOR HIS GIVING UP PETTY'S HOUSE AND LAND FOREVER, FOR THE SERVICE OF THE LORD AND THE PEOPLE CALLED QUAKERS.

"The eternal God, who hath, in and by his eternal powerful arm, preserved me through all my troubles, trials, temptations, and afflictions; persecutions, reproaches, and imprisonments; and carried me over them all, hath sanctified all these things to me, so that I can say, all things work together for good to them that love God, and are beloved of him.

"And the Lord God of the whole heaven and earth, and all things therein, both natural and spiritual, hath been, by his eternal power, my preserver, and upholder, and keeper, and hath taken care and provided for me, both for temporals and spirituals, so that I never did want; and have been content and thankful with what the Lord provided for me.

"And now the Lord hath done much good to me, and to his name, truth, and people, to whom I have offered up my spirit, soul, and body, which are the Lord's, made and created for his glory. And also I do offer and give up freely to the Lord forever, and for the service of his sons, daughters, and servants, called Quakers, the house and houses, barn, kiln, stable, and all the land, with the garden and orchard, being about three acres of land, more or less; with the commonings, peats, turfings, moss, and whatsoever other privileges that belong to it, called Swarthmore, in the parish of Ulverstone.

"And also my ebony bedstead, with the painted curtains, and the great elbow-chair that Robert Widders sent me; and my great sea-case or cellaridge, with the bottles in it. These I do give to stand in the house as heir-looms, when the house is made use of for a meeting place; so that a Friend may

have a bed to lie on, and a chair to sit in, and a bottle to hold a little water to drink.

"It being free land, and free from all tithe, both great and small; and all this I do freely give up to the Lord, and for the Lord's service and his people's, to make it a meeting place of.

"It is all the land and house I have in England, and it is given up to the Lord, for it is for his service, and for his children's.

GEORGE FOX.

"Kingston-upon-Thames, 13th of 12th month, 1686."

"I do and have given up Petty's, which I bought of the children of Susannah Fell and Rachel Fell, for seventy-two pounds; for God's people to meet in, when they do not meet at Swarthmore-hall; and let the rest of the ground and malt-house maintain the meeting-house, which may be made fit, either the barn or the house, as the Lord shall let Friends see which is best; and to slate it, and pave the way to it, that so Friends may go dry to their meeting. And let or set part of the house and land to maintain itself forever for the Lord's service. And you may let any poor honest Friend live in part of the house. And so let it be for the Lord's service to the end of the world; and for his people to meet in, to keep them from the winter cold and the wet, and the summer heat." *

In a letter to his son-in-law, Thomas Lower, who lived at Mash-Grange, in Lancashire, he says: . . . "Dear Thomas, I have sent thee a copy of my mind, concerning Petty's, which thou mayest privately show to thy mother, and the list of the names. You that live in the country may know which of these are the fittest to put into the deed of trust." . . . . "This will be a confirmation of what has all along been in thy mother's mind; that the meeting will be continued at Swarthmore." . . . . "As for the affairs of truth, in the general, things are pretty well, and meetings are quiet both

* Tuke's Memoirs of George Fox, p. 294–300.

in England and beyond the seas. The Lord keep his people in his fear and in humility, in this time of liberty, that they do not forget Him; for there is danger in a time of liberty, as in a time of suffering, for that to get up which will not stand faithful; but my desire is that all may walk worthy of the Lord's mercies."

In another letter, he gives directions concerning the repairs and alterations required to fit the house for a place of worship, which was to be done at his own cost, except such building materials as some of the neighbouring Friends might be disposed to supply.*

* This building is yet standing, and has been occupied as a Friends' meeting-house, from a period soon after the death of George Fox, until the present time. It is described by a recent visiter, as "a pretty little stone edifice, in a neat and beautiful yard, surrounded by a high stone wall. The building is partly overgrown with ivy, and environed with hawthorn and holly bushes." Over the door is engraved this inscription, "Ex dono G. F. 1688," (the gift of George Fox, 1688). There are three rooms, one of which, used as the meeting-house, has a new wooden floor; the other two are paved with stone, and were used for the accommodation of Friends who came from a distance. In one of these stands an old wooden chest, which contains the library. An old ebony bedstead, the gift of George Fox, formerly stood here. It became unfit for use, and the pillars were taken out and inserted in the door-way for posts, in order to preserve them. They are polished beautifully, and present a quaint appearance.

Two massive arm-chairs, of solid oak, adorned with carved work, stand in the meeting-house. They belonged to George Fox and his wife, and have been removed hither from the hall. The bible which George Fox gave to Swarthmore meeting was formerly kept here, but is now placed in the custody of a neighbouring Friend. It is a large volume, printed in black-letter, with wooden backs, iron-bound at the corners, and having a chain and padlock attached, by which it was formerly fastened to a desk in the meeting-house.

About a quarter of a mile from the meeting-house stands Swarthmore-hall, now much reduced from its ancient dignity. A portion of it, having become dilapidated, has been removed, and that which remains presents the appearance of desolation and decay. The large hall where Friends held their meetings for forty years, remains nearly as it was in the days of George Fox. It has a bow-window, within which is a raised platform, from which he used to preach. The floor is paved with stone, and the ceiling and wainscot are of oak. A passage-way leads from this room, by an elevated

In the year 1687, King James II. issued his declaration of indulgence to all religious dissenters, by which the laws against non-conformity were suspended, and the penal tests removed. The Papists now began to appear more openly in the exercise of their religion, and their prayers by beads and to saints being much talked of, George Fox wrote a paper concerning prayer, in which he shows, that prayers to saints, and to Mary the mother of Christ, are not consistent with the doctrine of the blessed Jesus, who taught his disciples to pray to "Our Father who is in heaven."

"To take counsel of the dead," he adds, "was forbidden by the law of God; they were to take counsel of the Lord. He hath given Christ in the new covenant, in his gospel day, to be a counsellor and a leader to all believers in his light. Men are not to run to the dead, for the living; for the law and the testimony of God forbid it."

In the summer of 1687, he sojourned some weeks at the country-seat of his son-in-law William Mead, in Essex, and during the intervals between the attendance of neighbouring meetings, he wrote a number of letters and tracts for spreading the principles of Truth. "One was a paper proving from the scriptures, that people must repent before they can receive the gospel, and the Holy Spirit, and the kingdom of God, or be baptized." . . . . . "Another was a short paper, showing wherein God's people should be like unto him." In this paper, he maintains that God being holy, just, and good, requires his people to cultivate in themselves these heavenly qualities, and to manifest by their conduct, that they are the children of Him, "who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." But, inasmuch as most persons would acknowledge that God's

---

step, to the parlour. In this passage, it is said, Judge Fell used to sit during the time of divine worship; for although he could not countenance the Friends by sitting with them, yet he was drawn by an irresistible impulse, to listen to their powerful and heart-searching ministry.

(*From a private Letter.*)

people should be in this state of holiness, and yet few knew how to attain it; he was led, "in the openings of the Spirit of Truth," to write another paper, directing them to "the right way and means, whereby people might come to Christ, and so be made like unto God." In this, he shows that "Christ is the way, the truth, and the life," who has declared, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Now what is the means by which God doth draw his people to his Son, but by his Holy Spirit, who "poureth out the spirit upon all flesh, that is upon all men and women."

"Before I left this place," he says, "I wrote another paper, the scope whereof was to show, by many instances taken out of the holy scriptures, that the kingdom of God, which most people talk of at a distance, and refer altogether to another life, is in some measure to be known and entered into in this life; but that none can know an entrance thereinto but such as are regenerated and born again."

Thus did this faithful servant of Christ, by his writings, as well as his public ministry, call the attention of mankind to seek for the kingdom of heaven, as the reign of God in the soul; and to place their reliance upon the Spirit of his Son, as a Redeemer, not only from the guilt of sin, but likewise from the power and dominion of evil.

On the 17th of the 8th month (October) 1688, his mind being under deep religious exercise on account of the revolution in government which he saw was about to take place in England, he wrote "A general epistle to Friends, to warn them of the approaching storm, that they might all retire to the Lord, in whom is safety." About three weeks after the date of this epistle, William, Prince of Orange, landed in England, having been invited over by many of the most influential of the nobility and gentry. He was soon at the head of a powerful army, and King James, finding he had few adherents to support him, withdrew to France, and left the field to his antagonist.

After the accession of William and Mary to the sovereignty of Great Britain, a bill was introduced into Parliament, with the king's concurrence, for granting toleration to Protestant dissenters. While it was pending, during the spring of 1689, George Fox thus writes in his Journal: "Though I was weak in body, and not well able to stir to and fro, yet so great a concern was upon my spirit in behalf of truth and Friends, that I attended continually for many days, with others, at the Parliament-house, labouring with the members, that the thing might be done comprehensively and effectually." In the same year the act was passed, and approved by the king. It provided that none of the penal laws should be construed to extend to those Dissenters who should take the oaths to the present government, and a clause was inserted for the relief of the Society of Friends, accepting from them, instead of the oaths, a solemn promise to be faithful to the king and queen.

We can readily conceive how grateful it must have been to George Fox, now in the decline of life, to witness the passage of a law which, although it did not fully satisfy the demands of justice, secured a considerable degree of religious liberty. For forty years he, and those who were united with him in religious fellowship, had meekly borne the iron rod of persecution, "as deceivers, and yet true; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich." But now their patience had triumphed over the malice of their enemies, their uprightness was acknowledged by the nation at large, and they were permitted the tranquil enjoyment of their religion. Having stood firm in the dark season of adversity, and kept the faith through many trials, it was now to be seen, whether they would be equally faithful to their principles in the genial season of prosperity. That eminent minister to whom they had so long looked for counsel, saw, with prophetic eye, the dangers that awaited them, and thus expressed his paternal admonitions:

"To all that profess the truth of God.

"My desires are that you walk humbly in it; for when the Lord first called me forth, he let me see that young people grew up together in vanity and in the fashions of the world, and old people went downwards into the earth, raking it together; and to both these I was to be a stranger. And now, Friends, I do see too many young people that profess the truth, grow up into the fashions of the world, and too many parents indulge them; and amongst the elder, some are declining downwards, and raking after the earth. Therefore, take heed that you are not making your graves, while you are alive outwardly, and loading yourselves with thick clay. Hab. ii. 6. For if you have not power over the earthly spirit, and that which leadeth into a vain mind, and the fashions of the world, and into the earth; though you have often had the rain fall upon your fields, you will bring forth thistles, briars, and thorns, which are for the fire. Such will become brittle, peevish, fretful spirits, that will not abide the heavenly doctrine, the admonitions, exhortations, and reproofs of the Holy Ghost, or heavenly spirit of God; which would bring you to be conformable to the death of Christ, and to his image, that you might have fellowship with him in his resurrection. Therefore it is good for all to bow to the name of Jesus, their Saviour, that all may confess him to the glory of God the Father." . . . . . .

GEORGE FOX."

In the third month, 1689, he attended with much satisfaction, the Yearly Meeting of London; and soon after its close, he wrote an epistle to the Yearly or General Meeting about to be held at York.

It appears that there had been some dissension among Friends of that county; and this epistle, which breathes the spirit of christian charity, was well adapted to the occasion.

"Dear friends and brethren in Christ Jesus,

"Whom the Lord by his eternal arm and power hath pre-

served to this day, all walk in the power and spirit of God, that is over all, in love and unity; for love overcomes, builds up, and unites all the members of Christ to him the Head. Love keeps out of all strife, and is of God. Love, or charity, never fails, but keeps the mind above all outward things, and strife about outward things. It overcomes evil, and casts out all false fears. It is of God, and unites all the hearts of his people together in the heavenly joy, concord, and unity. The God of love preserve you all, and establish you in Christ Jesus, your life and salvation, in whom you have peace with God. So walk in him that ye may be ordered in his peaceable heavenly wisdom, to the glory of God, and the comfort one of another, Amen.

GEORGE FOX.

"London, the 27th of the 3d month, 1689."

In 1690, he attended, for the last time, the Yearly Meeting of London, "in which," he says, "the wonted goodness of the Lord was witnessed, his blessed presence enjoyed, and his heavenly power livingly felt opening the hearts of his people." Being deeply concerned for the preservation of Friends, and their growth in the spiritual life, he furnished an instructive supplement, to be added to the Yearly Meeting's epistle. The concluding paragraph is in these words:

"And now, dear friends and brethren everywhere, that are of the flock of Christ: Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us all keep this heavenly feast of our passover in his new testament and covenant, not with old leaven, neither of malice nor wickedness; but let all that be purged out, with the sour old leavened bread; that all may become a new lump: and so keep this heavenly feast of Christ, our heavenly passover, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Amen."

During the summer, he visited several meetings in the vicinity of London, in which he was favoured, through divine aid, to impart much religious instruction. In the autumn he returned to the city, where he remained more than a month,

employed in the weighty concerns of the church. There being at this time a bill before Parliament concerning oaths, and another relating to clandestine marriages, he was engaged, with others, in waiting upon members of the House, in order to have these bills so amended that they might not be prejudicial to Friends.

This service being ended, he retired to the country, and spent some weeks at Tottenham, Ford-green, and other neighbouring places, visiting Friends. While thus engaged, he wrote "A testimony concerning the life and death of his dear friend and brother in the Lord, John Burnyeat," of whom he speaks as "an able minister of Christ Jesus," . . . "an elder and a pillar in the house of God." This eminent man was convinced of Friends' principles in Cumberland, in 1653; and after travelling much in the work of the ministry in Great Britain, and her American colonies, he settled in Dublin, where his gospel labours, and holy life, rendered him a blessing to the church. In great peace of mind, he closed his life in Ireland, on the 11th of the 7th month, 1690, in the 59th year of his age.*

While at Tottenham, George Fox wrote an epistle to Friends in the ministry, in which he says:

"All Friends in the ministry every where," . . . "do not hide your talent, nor put your light under a bushel; nor cumber yourselves, nor entangle yourselves with the affairs of this world. For the natural soldiers are not to cumber themselves with the world; much less the soldiers of Christ, who are not of this world; but are to mind the riches and glory of the world that is everlasting. Therefore stir up the gift of God in you, improve it, and do not sit down, Demas-like, and embrace this present world, that will have an end, lest ye become idolaters. Be valiant for God's truth upon the earth, and spread it abroad in the daylight of Christ; you who have sought the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and have received it and preached it; which stands in right-

* Testimony of Friends in Ireland, in J. Burnyeat's Works.

eousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. As able ministers of the spirit sow to the spirit, that of the spirit ye may reap life everlasting."

He wrote, soon after, another epistle, addressed more particularly "to Friends in the ministry that were gone to America."

The following passage, selected from it, is worthy of note:

"And Friends, be not negligent, but keep your negroes' meetings, and your family meetings; and have meetings with the Indian kings, and their councils and subjects every where, and with others. Bring them all to the baptizing and circumcizing spirit, by which they may know God, and serve and worship him. And all take heed of sitting down in the earth, and having your minds in the earthly things, coveting and striving for the earth: for to be carnally minded brings death, and covetousness is idolatry. There is too much strife and contention about that idol, which makes too many go out of the sense and fear of God; so that some have lost morality, humanity, and true christian charity. O therefore, be awakened to righteousness, and keep awakened; for the enemy soweth his tares, while men and women sleep in carelessness and security." . . . . .

In the latter part of the 10th month, he returned to the city, where, being deeply impressed with a sense of the hardships endured by Friends in Ireland, and the danger they incurred by reason of the civil war then prevailing in that country, he wrote them a letter of sympathy and encouragement, which was the last production of his pen, and is dated the 10th of the 11th month, 1690.

Up to this time, he had kept his own Journal, which is continued by William Penn in these words:

"Thus, reader, thou hast some account of the life and travels, labours, sufferings, and manifold trials and exercises of this holy man of God, from his youth to almost the time of his death: of which himself kept a Journal, whence the foregoing sheets were transcribed. It remains that an account

be added of the time, place, and manner of his death and burial, which was thus:

"The next day after he had written the foregoing epistle to Friends in Ireland, he went to the meeting at Grace-church street, which was large (it being on the First-day of the week): and the Lord enabled him to preach the truth fully and effectually, opening many deep and weighty things with great power and clearness. After which, having prayed, and the meeting being ended, he went to Henry Gouldney's (a Friend's house in Whitehart Court, near the meeting-house): and some Friends going with him, he told them, 'He thought he felt the cold strike to his heart as he came out of the meeting;' yet added, 'I am glad I was here; now I am clear, I am fully clear.' As soon as those Friends were withdrawn, he laid down upon a bed, (as he sometimes used to do, through weariness after a meeting,) but soon rose again; and in a little time laid down again, complaining still of cold. And his strength sensibly decaying, he was fain, soon after, to go into the bed, where he lay in much contentment and peace, and very sensible to the last. And as, in the whole course of his life, his spirit, in the universal love of God, was set and bent for the exalting of truth and righteousness, and the making known the way thereof to the nations and people afar off; so now, in the time of his outward weakness, his mind was intent upon, and wholly taken up with that; and he sent for some particular Friends, to whom he expressed his mind and desire for the spreading of Friends' books, and truth thereby, in the world. Divers Friends came to visit him in his illness, unto some of whom he said, 'All is well; the seed of God reigns over all, and over death itself. And though,' said he, 'I am weak in body, yet the power of God is over all, and the seed reigns over all disorderly spirits.' Thus, lying in an heavenly frame of mind, his spirit wholly exercised towards the Lord, he grew weaker and weaker in his natural strength; and on the Third-day of that week, between the hours of nine and ten in the evening, he quietly departed

this life in peace, and sweetly fell asleep in the Lord, whose blessed truth he had livingly and powerfully preached in the meeting but two days before. Thus ended he his day in his faithful testimony, in perfect love and unity with his brethren, and in peace and good-will to all men, on the 13th of the 11th month, 1690, being then in the 67th year of his age."

The duty of communicating the mournful event to the widow, who was then in Lancashire, devolved upon William Penn. "I am," he says, "to be the teller to thee of sorrowful tidings in some respect, which is this: that thy dear husband, and my beloved and dear friend, finished his glorious testimony this night, about half an hour after nine, being sensible to the last breath." . . . . . "A prince indeed is fallen in Israel to-day. He died as he lived, a lamb minding the things of God and his church to the last in an universal spirit."

His funeral was a season of great solemnity. During nearly three days, the coffin was kept open, and many hundreds of Friends came to look upon the corpse, which appeared as though he had fallen into a sweet sleep.* On the 16th of the month, the day appointed for interment, a great concourse of Friends and others assembled at the meeting-house in Grace-church street, whither the body had been taken.

A solemn meeting was held about two hours, and several Friends in the ministry, among whom was William Penn, spoke most feelingly of the deceased,—bearing testimony to his innocent life, his unwearied labours of love in the gospel of Christ, his manifold sufferings for the truth, and to the all-sufficiency of the power of God, to whom alone he ascribed his preservation. The six monthly meetings in London had each appointed six Friends to bear the body to the grave, and the procession which followed was variously estimated at from two to four thousand persons.

He was interred at Friends' burying-ground, near Bunhill

* See Barclay's Letters of Early Friends, Lib. XI. p. 387–9.

fields, where, after a time of solemn silence, several ministers spoke impressively on the sufficiency of that divine spirit and power by which this extraordinary man had been raised up and qualified to fulfil the work assigned him by the great Head of the church.

Margaret Fox, although ten years older than her husband, survived him eleven years, during which she continued to reside at Swarthmore-hall. It appears from the letters of some of the most distinguished among the early Friends, that she was much beloved and honoured for her eminent virtues and her efficient services in the church.

During the reign of Charles II., she was often engaged in personal applications to the king, for the release of her imprisoned Friends, a service for which she was well adapted, by her soundness of judgment and dignity of character. She was a devoted minister of the gospel, a firm supporter of christian discipline, diligent in visiting the sick and the imprisoned, hospitable in entertaining strangers, and judicious in the education of her children.

As the close of life drew nigh, she was comforted with the full assurance of divine favour, saying to a Friend who called to see her, "The Lord is with me, and I am with the Lord, and in Him only will I trust, and commit all to the divine providence of the Lord, both concerning my children and grandchildren, and all things they do enjoy from Him, both in spirituals and naturals, who is the God of all the mercies and blessings to his people, throughout all generations! To him be glorious praises forever. Amen." *

She died at Swarthmore-hall, in Lancashire, the 22d of the 2d month, 1702, in the eighty-eighth year of her age.

---

* Life of M. Fell.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Personal appearance—Dress— Property — Character — Ministry—the early Friends—Statistics of the Society—Conclusion.

George Fox was rather above the common stature. In early manhood, he was robust and active; as he advanced in years, his figure inclined to corpulency.

His eyes were gray, and piercing, his countenance was graceful, his deportment grave.*

In conversation he was instructive and courteous, and his manners, as described by William Penn, were "civil beyond all forms of breeding." Hence, we may conclude, he was endowed with that true courtesy, which springs from kindness of heart, and a just appreciation of the rights and feelings of others,—a politeness, that far transcends all the forms of etiquette.

His dress was simple and substantial; being a plain gray coat, with alchemy buttons,† and, during the early part of his ministry, he wore breeches of leather, or buckskin.

It appears that he inherited some property, a part of which he left in the hands of his relatives, not being inclined to incumber himself with it, after he became concerned in the gospel ministry.‡

His continual religious engagements, in a great measure, precluded him from pursuing any regular secular employment; but his manner of living, being plain and unexpensive, he had the means, not only to supply his own wants, but to minister to the comfort of others. We have seen, that on his marriage with the widow of Judge Fell, he secured his wife's estate to her and her children, being scrupulously careful not

* T. Ellwood's Testimony, William Penn's Preface, Tuke's Memoir of George Fox, &c.

† Journal; Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism.

‡ Anti-Christian Treachery discovered,—English Ed. 1686, p. 129.

to enrich himself by it. "From an account which he left behind him, it appears that he held shares of two vessels, belonging to Scarborough, and had also a small share in some business. Several sums of money belonging to him are likewise mentioned, as being in the hands of different Friends," and the amount of his property has been estimated at about eight hundred pounds sterling, exclusive of one thousand acres of land in Pennsylvania, presented to him by William Penn.* The title to this land he gave to the meetings of Friends in that province, but it was not located till after his death.†

His character, having been drawn by the masterly hand of William Penn, who was long and intimately acquainted with him, cannot be better described than by quoting his language.

"I. He was a man that God endowed with a clear and wonderful depth, a discerner of others' spirits and very much a master of his own. And though the side of his understanding, which lay next to the world, and especially the expression of it, might sound uncouth and unfashionable to nice ears, his matter was nevertheless very profound, and would not only bear to be often considered, but the more it was so, the more weighty and instructing it appeared. And as abruptly and brokenly, as sometimes his sentences would fall from him, about divine things, it is well known they were often as texts to many fairer declarations. And indeed it showed beyond all contradiction that God sent him, that no arts or parts had any share in the matter or manner of his ministry, and that so many great, excellent, and necessary truths as he came forth to preach to mankind, had therefore nothing of man's wit or wisdom to recommend them. So that as to man he was an original, being no man's copy. And his ministry and writings show they are from one that was not taught of man, nor had learned what he said by study. Nor

* Tuke's Memoir of George Fox, p. 307.

† Janney's Life of Penn, chap. XXXIV.

were they notional or speculative, but sensible and practical truths, tending to conversion and regeneration, and the setting up the kingdom of God in the hearts of men, and the way of it was his work. So that, I have many times been overcome in myself, and been made to say with my Lord and master, upon the like occasion, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed them to babes;' for many times hath my soul bowed in humble thankfulness to the Lord, that he did not choose any of the wise and learned of this world, to be the first messenger in our age, of his blessed truth to men; but that he took one that was not of high degree or elegant speech, or learned after the way of this world, that his message and work he sent him to do might come with less suspicion or jealousy of human wisdom and interest, and with more force and clearness, upon the consciences of those that sincerely sought the way of truth in the love of it. I say, beholding with the eye of my mind, which the God of heaven had opened in me, the marks of God's finger and hand, visibly in this testimony from the clearness of the principle, the power and efficacy of it in the exemplary sobriety, plainness, zeal, steadiness, humility, gravity, punctuality, charity and circumspect care in the government of church affairs, which shined in his and their life, and testimony that God employed in this work, it greatly confirmed me that it was of God, and engaged my soul in a deep love, fear, reverence, and thankfulness, for his love and mercy therein to mankind. . . . .

"II. In his testimony or ministry, he much laboured to open truth to the people's understandings, and to bottom them upon the principle and principal, Christ Jesus, the light of the world, that by bringing them to something that was of God in themselves, they might the better know and judge of him and themselves.

"He had an extraordinary gift in opening the scriptures. He would go to the marrow of things, and show the mind,

harmony, and fulfilling of them with much plainness, and to great comfort and edification. The mystery of the first and second Adam, of the fall and restoration, of the law and gospel, of shadow and substance, of the servant's and son's state, and the fulfilling the scriptures in Christ and by Christ, the true light, in all that are his, through the obedience of faith, were much of the substance and drift of his testimonies. In all which he was witnessed to be of God, being sensibly felt to speak that which he had received of Christ, and was his own experience in that which never errs nor fails.

"But above all he excelled in prayer. The inwardness and weight of his spirit, the reverence and solemnity of his address and behaviour, and the fewness and fulness of his words, have often struck even strangers with admiration, as they used to reach others with consolation. The most awful, living, reverent frame I ever felt or beheld, I must say, was his in prayer. And truly it was a testimony he knew and lived nearer to the Lord than other men; for they that know him most, will see most reason to approach him with reverence and fear.

"He was of an innocent life, no busy-body nor self-seeker, neither touchy nor critical; what fell from him was very inoffensive, if not very edifying. So meek, contented, modest, easy, steady, tender, it was a pleasure to be in his company. He exercised no authority but over evil, and that everywhere and in all; but with love, compassion, and long-suffering; a most merciful man, as ready to forgive, as unapt to take or give an offence. Thousands can truly say, he was of an excellent spirit and savour among them, and because thereof the most excellent spirits loved him with an unfeigned and unfading love." . . . .

"But as in the primitive times, some rose up against the blessed apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, even from among those that had been turned to the hope of the gospel, and who became their greatest trouble, so this man of God had his share of suffering from some that were convinced by him, who,

through prejudice or mistake, ran against him, as one that sought dominion over conscience; because he pressed, by his presence or epistles, a ready and zealous compliance with such good and wholesome things as tended to an orderly conversation about the affairs of the church, and in their walking before men. That which contributed much to this ill work, was, in some, a begrudging of this meek man the love and esteem he had and deserved in the hearts of the people, and weakness in others, that were taken with their groundless suggestions of imposition and blind obedience." . . . . .

"In all these occasions, though there was no person the discontented struck so sharply at as this good man, he bore all their weakness and prejudice, and returned not reflection for reflection; but forgave them their weak and bitter speeches, praying for them, that they might have a sense of their hurt, and see the subtlety of the enemy, to rend and divide, and return into their first love, that thought no ill. And truly I must say, that though God had visibly clothed him with a divine preference and authority, and indeed his very presence expressed a religious majesty, yet he never abused it, but held his place in the church of God with great meekness, and a most engaging humility and moderation. For, upon all occasions, like his blessed master, he was a servant to all, holding and exercising his eldership in the invisible power that had gathered them, with reverence to the head, and care over the body, and was received only in that spirit and power of Christ, as the first and chief elder in this age; who, as he was therefore worthy of double honour, so, for the same reason, it was given by the faithful of this day; because his authority was inward, and not outward, and that he got it and kept it by the love of God, and power of an endless life. I write by knowledge, and not report, and my witness is true, having been with him for weeks and months together on divers occasions, and those of the nearest and most exercising nature, and that by night and by day, by sea and by land, in this and in foreign countries: and I can say I never saw him

out of his place, or not a match for every service or occasion.

"For in all things he acquitted himself like a man, yea a strong man, a new and heavenly-minded man. A divine and a naturalist, and all of God Almighty's making. I have been surprised at his questions and answers in natural things, that whilst he was ignorant of useless and sophistical science, he had in him the foundation of useful and commendable knowledge, and cherished it every where. Civil beyond all forms of breeding in his behaviour; very temperate, eating little and sleeping less, though a bulky person.

"Thus he lived and sojourned among us; and as he lived so he died, feeling the same eternal power that had raised and preserved him in his last moments. So full of assurance was he, that he triumphed over death; and so even to the last, as if death were hardly worth notice or mention: recommending to some with him the despatch and dispersion of an epistle just before written to the churches of Christ throughout the world, and his own books; but above all, Friends, and of all Friends those in Ireland and America, twice over: saying, 'Mind poor Friends in Ireland and America.' And to some that came in and inquired how he found himself, he answered, 'Never heed, the Lord's power is over all weakness and death, the Seed reigns, blessed be the Lord.'"

Among a large number of contemporary testimonies to the exalted virtues and rare endowments of George Fox, which might be cited, that of Thomas Ellwood, who certainly was a competent judge, is particularly full as to the purity of his life, the meekness of his character, and the baptizing power of his ministry.

Being endowed by Divine Wisdom with a remarkable gift of discernment, he was enabled to speak to the states of his auditors, "rightly dividing the word of truth." An instance of this was related by an aged female Friend, in these words: "And now, Friends, I will tell you how I was first convinced. I was a young lass at that time, and lived in Dorsetshire,

when George Fox came to that country; and he having appointed a meeting to which people generally flocked, I went among the rest; and in my going along the road, the query arose in my mind, what is it that I feel which condemneth me when I do evil, and justifieth me when I do well? what is it? In this state I went to the meeting. It was a large gathering, and George Fox rose up with these words: 'Who art thou that queriest in thy mind, what is it which I feel, which condemneth me when I do evil, and justifieth me when I do well? I will tell thee what it is. Lo! he that formeth the mountains and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name. It is he by his spirit that condemneth thee for evil, and justifieth thee when thou doest well. Keep under its dictates, and it will be thy preserver to the end." To this narration the ancient Friend added, "It was the truth, the very truth, and I have never departed from it."

His kindness and condescension to the young, may be illustrated by the following passage from the testimony of John Taylor: "The Lord did wonderfully appear with him, for the gathering of people to himself, having given him the word of reconciliation to preach to the poor and needy, whereof I am a living witness. When I first went to him, he treated me in meekness like a lamb; he took me by the hand and said, 'Young man, this is the word of the Lord to thee, there are three scriptures thou must witness to be fulfilled; first, thou must be turned from darkness to light; next, thou must come to the knowledge of the glory of God; and then, thou must be changed from glory to glory;' and this had such an impression on on me, that I was fully satisfied he was sent of God, and the word of life was with him; and what he said unto me was more effectual than all that I had ever heard from all my teachers before, to the settling and confirming me in the faith of Jesus Christ; and I praised the Lord that sent this his

faithful witness with the gospel of peace and glad tidings to my soul."

In his ministry and in his writings, he was remarkable for his frequent reference to the scriptures, which he was enabled, through divine grace, to expound clearly, and to apply pertinently to every subject that came before him. These sacred records he considered of inestimable value, and he recommended their frequent perusal; for, when read with the mind turned towards Him who "hath the key of David," they "are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus."

In all the relations of domestic life, his conduct was con formed to the christian standard. His widow, in her testimony concerning him, says, he was not a man of this world, but chosen out of it; and his step-children have left on record an affectionate tribute to his memory.

In contemplating the career of this extraordinary man, we cannot fail to perceive that his most striking characteristic was, simple obedience to manifested duty; which, happily, is attainable by every sincere and devoted follower of the Lamb. When sent forth on his mission of love, the burden of his testimony was, that Jesus Christ teaches his people himself, through the influence of his Spirit, which is the light and life of the regenerated soul. They who come fully under the government of this Heavenly Power, are led by it to renounce the glory of the world and to follow the footsteps of the holy Redeemer.

There is abundant evidence to show that many of the early Friends attained to this state, and became as lights in the world, as a city set upon a hill, that could not be hid. It has been remarked by an English writer, that "Quakerism is distinguished particularly by the brevity of its articles of faith, and the rigour of its life. The merely doctrinal part of Quakerism consists in four articles only: The existence of God; the authenticity of the scriptures; the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and the divinity of Jesus Christ. But the moral code

of Quakerism for governing the conduct of its members makes the most direct and specific war on the great besetting evils of life and society that has ever been attempted. Luxury of every kind is proscribed, not only in itself, but in its great consequences, war and slavery; for it is clear that, without a desire for luxury, neither war nor slavery could arise." . . . "The most usual objection to Quakerism is, that it is by far too refined and spiritual a system for this world. But its votaries have proved, through the vicissitudes of two centuries, that it is eminently calculated to make men happier, wiser, and better. The great principles which the early apostles of the sect were the first to introduce successfully, have been adopted by thousands, who were not aware to what source they were indebted for them. These principles have gained ground rapidly, and must continue to widen their dominion over the hearts of men as society advances towards the christian standard, for they lie at the very foundation of all true moral, intellectual, and political reforms." *

The excellency of the principles held by the Society of Friends being now generally admitted, the inquiry arises, "Has it increased in numbers? Or is it, as some have alleged, in a state of decline, and destined to extinction?" A brief examination of this question may not be inappropriate.

It appears, that of the great numbers convinced of Friends' principles through the ministry of George Fox and his coadjutors, there were many who did not become members.† From the best estimate that can now be made, it is believed that in 1680, being ten years prior to the death of Fox, the Society, in Great Britain and Ireland, numbered 40,000 members.‡

We have no means of estimating the number in the American colonies, but it could not have been very considerable, as

* Friends' Review, I. 358.

† Tuke's Memoir of George Fox—Preface.

‡ London Friend, 1852.

the settlement of Pennsylvania had not then been begun. The meetings of Friends in Holland and Germany were never very large, and it would probably be safe to estimate the aggregate number of Friends in all parts of the world, in 1680, at fifty thousand. During the subsequent fifteen years, no less than ten thousand Friends emigrated from Great Britain and Ireland, and settled in the American colonies. The tide of emigration, during the greater part of the 18th century, was setting in the same direction, and even at this day it still continues, though greatly diminished, as regards the Society of Friends.

Owing to various causes, but chiefly to emigration, the number of members in Great Britain is now greatly reduced, and but little exceeds eighteen thousand; whereas there are, in the United States and Canada, from one hundred and twenty-five, to one hundred and fifty thousand, including the two main branches, or separate organizations, into which the Society is unhappily divided.* Both of these bodies hold the fundamental principles of the early Friends; acknowledge Fox, Penn, and Barclay as standard authorities, support the same testimonies, worship in the same mode, and maintain the same form of church government.

In addition to the numbers above stated, there are many others who attend the meetings of Friends, and hold the same principles, but not being in actual membership, are not included in this estimate.

From these statistics it is manifest, that the Society of Friends has not diminished, but on the contrary has greatly increased, during the two centuries of its existence. It is, moreover, encouraging to reflect, that some of the practical views promulgated by George Fox, and which in his day met

* The London "Friend," (1852,) estimates the number of Friends in the United States at 131,200, including both branches. The United States census of 1850, reports the number of meeting-houses belonging to Friends to be 715, affording seats for 283,000 persons; but the number of members is not given.

with general opposition, are now held by very many who are in no wise connected with the Society of Friends; thus showing that the same Divine Power, which called him to the great work of social reformation, is operating upon the hearts of mankind, perhaps more effectually than at any former period.

There is, however, no reason to conclude that this Society, if it live up to its principles, will be less useful hereafter, than it has been in past ages. There is still a vast amount of false doctrine and useless ceremony in professing christendom,—priest-craft continues to exert its baneful influence,—the spirit of war is yet unsubdued,—oppression invades the domestic hearth, and severs the dearest ties of our nature. Is it a time for those who ought to be the successors of Fox and Penn, and Barclay, to desert the standard of their profession, and go back to the world?

If all who profess the doctrines, would follow the example, of the early Friends; the "stress of whose ministry was conversion to God, regeneration and holiness; not schemes of doctrine and verbal creeds,"* then would we see in our day, a revival of the gospel spirit, and christian zeal, that actuated those sons of the morning. Then would there be a joining of hand in hand, and shoulder to shoulder, in supporting those noble testimonies that George Fox and his coadjutors so faithfully bore; then would the Society become instrumental to elevate the standard of christian truth, and would say to others in the impressive language of example, "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

---

* William Penn's Preface to George Fox's Journal.

THE END.

A DISSERTATION

ON THE

VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX

CONCERNING

THE DOCTRINES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

CONTENTS.

Introductory Remarks. . . . . Page 415
Immediate Revelation 417
The Holy Scriptures 418
The Father, Word, and Holy Spirit. . . 422
The Original and Present State of Man . 424
The Atonement or Reconciliation . . . 426
Letter of George Fox to Governor of Barbadoes. 431
Summary 436
Perfection 440
Baptism. 441
The Lord's Supper 448

A DISSERTATION ON THE DOCTRINAL VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX.

The religion of George Fox and the early Friends was, in their view, a revival of primitive christianity. They professed to teach no new doctrines. Having experienced in themselves the saving efficacy of Divine grace, their minds were enlightened by this holy influence, which they found to be a more sure reliance than the laborious efforts of human wisdom.

We are taught by universal experience that the reasoning process cannot originate the elements of knowledge, either in natural or spiritual things. An acute intellect may promote knowledge by generalizing facts observed, and drawing conclusions from known premises; but the basis of knowledge, in natural things, must be laid by observation and experiment. Hence the inductive method of reasoning, based on observation, and applied to useful purposes, has redeemed philosophy from the visionary theories of ancient times, and made it subservient to human progress.

The insufficiency of human reason to lay the foundations of spiritual knowledge, is still more apparent.

All the saving knowledge we can have of God, and of duty, and the soul, must be witnessed in our own interior consciousness. The experience of others, when communicated to us, may direct us to the fountain whence the water of life proceeds; but we cannot participate in its healing efficacy by their experience; we must apply in prayer to Him whose spirit of grace will be "in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life."* "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."† This fountain of life and divine knowledge is opened in every sincere, devoted soul, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them."‡

Hence we find that the Most High, in his infinite wisdom, "hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty," . . . "that no flesh should glory in his presence."§

As in the first promulgation of the doctrines of Christ, he chose poor fishermen for his messengers, so in the revival of the gospel spirit among the primitive Friends, the great Head of the church made use of many instruments who had little of the world's wisdom or erudition to recommend them.

The account which William Penn gives of these ministers, in his Preface to the Journal of George Fox, is worthy of especial attention.

He says, "they were changed men themselves before they went about to change others." . . . . "They went not forth or preached in their own time or will, but in the will of God, and spoke not their own studied matter, but as they were opened and moved of his spirit with which they were well acquainted in their own conversions;" . . . . "The bent and stress of their ministry was conversion to God, regeneration and holiness; not schemes of doctrines and verbal creeds or new forms of worship, but a leaving off in religion the superfluous, and reducing the ceremonious and formal part, and pressing earnestly the substantial, the necessary and profitable part; as all upon a serious reflection must and do acknowledge. They directed people to a principle, by which all that they asserted, preached, and exhorted others to, might be wrought in them, and known through experience to them to be true; which is a high and distinguishing mark of the truth of their ministry; both that they knew what they said and were not afraid of coming to the test. For as they were bold from certainty, so they required conformity upon no human authority, but upon conviction, and the conviction of this principle which they asserted was in them that they preached unto, and unto that directed them, that they might examine and prove the reality of those things which they had affirmed of it, and its manifestation and work in man.

"They reached to the inward state and condition of people, which is an evidence of the virtue of their principle, and of their ministering from it, and not their own imaginations, glosses, or comments upon scripture. For nothing reaches the heart but what is from the heart, or pierces the con-

* John iv. 14. † Rev. xxii. 17. ‡ Rom. i. 19. § I. Cor. i. 27, 29.

science but what comes from a living conscience, insomuch as it hath often happened, where people have under secrecy revealed their state or condition to some choice friends for advice or ease, they had been so particularly directed in the ministry of this people, that they had challenged their friends with discovering their secrets and telling the preachers their cases; yea, the very thoughts and purposes of the hearts of many had been so plainly detected, that they have, like Nathaniel, cried out of this inward appearance of Christ, 'Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.'

"The accomplishments with which this principle fitted even some of the meanest of this people for their work and service, furnishing some of them with an extraordinary understanding in divine things, and an admirable fluency and taking way of expression, which gave occasion to some to wonder, saying of them, as of their master, 'Is not this such a mechanic's son? how came he by this learning?'

"They came forth low and despised and hated as the primitive christians did, and not by the help of worldly wisdom or power, as former reformations in part have done; but in all things it may be said this people were brought forth in the cross, in contradiction to the ways, worship, fashion, and customs of the world, yea, against wind and tide, that so no flesh might glory before God."

This portrait of the primitive Friends, drawn by the hand of a master, is especially applicable to George Fox.

It is no disparagement to his ministry, that he was not instructed in scholastic theology. Such an education would have only obstructed his progress, by piling up around him the rubbish of centuries,—the metaphysical subtleties of polemic divinity,—all of which it would have been necessary to remove, before the foundations could be laid of that pure, simple, sublime faith, which rests solely on the revelation of God in the soul.

IMMEDIATE REVELATION.

As the nature of the outward sun can only be known through the medium of its light, and as no definitions or descriptions can give an idea of light, without the sense of vision, so it is manifest that God, who is the sun of the spiritual world, cannot be made known by mere definitions or logical deductions.

His light,—his grace,—the power of his eternal word shining into the soul,—can alone give us a true and saving knowledge of Him. This great truth was remarkably exhibited in the results that attended the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Although he spake as never man spake, being endowed with divine wisdom and power, through the spirit of the Father, who dwelt in him, yet none received his ministry, save those who were obedient to the inward teachings of the Spirit. "No man can come to me," he said, "except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."*

It was to this inward living power which draws the soul to God, that

* John vi. 44.

George Fox appealed continually, and the burden of his ministry was, that "Jesus Christ teaches his people himself."

This inward teaching through the immediate revelation of divine grace, was then, and still is, the fundamental doctrine of the Society of Friends. But they distinguish clearly between the teacher and the recipient,—between the light and the eye,—between the power of God and the conscience of man in which it is revealed. This faculty of the soul may be clouded by prejudice, benumbed by disobedience, and even "seared as with a hot iron,"* by long-continued transgression; but the light itself, though obscured, or lost to our vision, remains ever the same, for the Divine nature is unchangeable.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

As the discoveries of Divine Truth in every age must be consistent with each other, though varied in degree, according to the states and capacities of the people, George Fox appealed to the scriptures for confirmation of the doctrines he taught. These sacred records he considered of inestimable value, but susceptible of being understood by those only whose minds are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and who have experienced in themselves something of those spiritual realities which the inspired penmen describe.†

Although he did not call the scriptures the word of God, because this title is appropriated by the sacred writers to the Son of God,—"the word that was in the beginning with God and was God," yet he believed they were "given forth by the Holy Spirit of God," and "are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."‡

The views of George Fox concerning the effect of Adam's transgression, and the Divinity, atonement, and mediation of Christ, having been a subject of controversy with some who profess his doctrines, will require a careful and unprejudiced investigation. In order to arrive at a just conclusion, it is necessary to collate a large number of his doctrinal and controversial works, which, with his Journal, form eight octavo volumes. Nor can we enter fully into this subject without taking some notice of the doctrines then commonly held by those Protestant sects with whose members he was frequently engaged in controversy, because the expressions found in his works often relate to those opinions which he believed it his duty to oppose.

On several occasions, he gave forth declarations of his faith, to refute the slanders of his enemies, but they were couched in scripture lan-

* 1 Tim. iv. 2.

† Works, VI. 35. Doctrinals, 743.

‡ Letter to Governor of Barbadoes.

guage, and the question still recurs, In what sense did he understand the texts employed? One of the most noted of these declarations, is his letter to the governor and council of Barbadoes, which is chiefly a collocation of scripture phrases.

This letter will be given in the sequel, and placed in parallel columns with other explanatory passages, selected from his works, in order that the reader may judge for himself, in what sense George Fox understood the passages he quoted.

It is not to be expected that all who read his works, or passages selected from them, will come to precisely the same conclusions with regard to his doctrines. The same may be said of the sacred scriptures, from which quotations are constantly made, for the purpose of supporting a contrariety of opinions. This arises, in part, from the circumstance, that for the full development of a great truth, it is sometimes necessary to present it under different aspects, all of which should be taken into view, in order to obtain a clear conception of it.

One set of scripture texts is generally quoted by trinitarian writers, and another set by those who hold the opposite doctrines; yet each may be equally sincere in thinking he holds the true scriptural doctrines, because those passages which express his own views are most familiar to him, and he overlooks the others, or construes them in accordance with his pre-conceived opinions.

Like persons looking at a landscape from different standing points, they see it under different aspects of light and shade; and objects which are conspicuous to one, may be hidden from another.

How unwise it were, in this case, to quarrel with our neighbours. or to question their sincerity! If we cannot change our standing-points so as to survey the whole ground, we ought at least to exercise charity towards others.

Another cause of religious controversy is found in the ambiguity of language. Few words have a meaning so definite that they cannot be misunderstood, and many words in our language have several meanings.

The hearer or reader, may attach to them a signification, entirely different from that intended by the speaker or writer. Moreover, we must consider that words are but symbols or signs of ideas, which, being held up before us, we who hear or read them must find in ourselves or elaborate the idea intended to be conveyed. If it has never before been conceived in us, we may find it difficult to realize, what to another mind under different circumstances would be perfectly intelligible.

There is yet another, and a principal difficulty in dealing with those ideas which relate to the being of God, and his manifestations to man. It is impossible for a finite creature, chiefly conversant with the objects

of sense, to comprehend perfectly the being and attributes of an infinite spirit.

In the scriptures of Truth, He is presented to us,—in the best way perhaps that human language could present Him,—under various figures or symbols borrowed from terrestrial forms, for "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made."*

In the bold imagery of oriental poetry, the author of the universe is sometimes represented, as a conqueror treading down his enemies,—as a tower of strength, a fortress of safety; and herein is signified his infinite power.

Again, he appears as the tender parent of his intelligent creation, "a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow;" a shepherd that leads his flock in the green pastures, and causes them to lie down by the still waters of life,—symbols which beautifully illustrate his goodness and mercy. He is even represented as suffering under the infliction of evil;—saying, "thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities."†

His omnipresence is frequently represented under the most sublime figures, as a universal, all-pervading spirit, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain; yet he is said to dwell in the human soul, and to make his abode in the contrite heart.

All these figures are truly emblematic in the sense used by the writers, and yet no one of them, taken by itself, conveys a perfect idea of the Deity.

The same may be said of the figurative language, used to describe the character and offices of Christ, in the work of man's redemption. The language already in use was necessarily employed, and the terms derived from the ceremonial law were freely used in describing him, not only as a King and a High Priest, a shepherd, and a bishop, but as a "lamb slain,"—a "passover sacrificed for us,"—and a spirit of light and life in the soul.

These figurative expressions, which, to the captious objector, may appear as discrepancies, present no real difficulty to the devout Christian. He knows that the Infinite and Eternal cannot be comprised in the finite and the transient. He seeks not for a knowledge of God and of Christ in the formal definitions and nice distinctions of theology, but finds comfort and encouragement in the glowing language of the prophets and apostles, who wrote from a heavenly impulse, and described what they had known and felt of Divine life.

If, in the passages to be cited from the works of George Fox, the

* Rom. ii. 20. † Is. xliii. 24.

reader shall find, at first, some obscurity or apparent discrepancies, let him go deeper, and they will probably be resolved by the increasing evidence of heavenly truth. It has been justly remarked that "a writer is not to be blamed because he is variously interpreted by his readers, or because the public masses have a degree of difficulty in conceiving his precise meaning. It will be so, if he has anything of real moment to say. . . . There has always been most of controversy, for this reason, about the meaning of the greatest authors and teachers."*

About the middle of the seventeenth century, when George Fox began to teach and write, nearly all the Protestant sects, as well as the Catholics, held the doctrines of the Trinity, original sin, and vicarious satisfaction.

The articles of the church of England, and the revised articles adopted by the Westminster Assembly, agree in the following doctrines—viz:

1. "That in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

2. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, but, together with his first sin imputed, it is the fault and corruption of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam." . . . . "Therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." "And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerate, whereby the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit."

3. "We are justified, that is we are accounted righteous before God, and have remission of sins; . . . only for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's sake, his whole obedience and satisfaction being by God imputed to us." Or as the Westminister articles express it, "we are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," &c.†

These were the popular doctrines of that age, generally held by Episcopalians, Catholics, Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists.

And, moreover, it was maintained that justification precedes sanctification; the former being derived from Christ's righteousness imputed to believers, for whom he died as a substitute to satisfy Divine justice; the latter being wrought in man by the operation of Divine grace.

It remains now to be considered whether George Fox accepted or rejected these popular dogmas; and if he rejected them, in what sense he understood the scripture texts generally adduced in their support.‡

---

* Bushnell's God in Christ. † Neale's Hist. of Puritans, II.

‡ In this dissertation the selections from the writings of George Fox are taken verbatim from his Journal, first London edition, 1694; his Doctrinals, London edition, 1706; his "Great Mystery," London edition, 1659, and Saul's Errand to Damascus, London edition, 1654.

References are also given to George Fox's Works, American edition, 1831, and to his Journal, Collins' New York edition, 1800.

THE FATHER, WORD AND HOLY SPIRIT.

In "a testimony of what we believe of Christ before he was manifest in the flesh," &c., after quoting the text, 1 John, v. 7, George Fox thus proceeds. "And ye professors who have given new names to the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, as (Trinity, and three distinct persons,) and say the scripture is your rule for your doctrine, but there is no such rule in the scripture to call them by these new names, which the apostle that gave forth the scripture doth not give them, and because we do not call the Father, and the Word, and the Holy Ghost by your new names, therefore do you falsely say, that the *Quakers* deny Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which we own in those names and sound words in which the Holy men of God speak them forth by the Holy Ghost, which ye give other new names to, and yet say ye have not the same spirit which they had that gave forth the scriptures. So which is to be followed? judge yourselves. But this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us a mind to know him, which is true, and we are in him that is true; mark, that is, in his Son Jesus Christ, this same is very God and eternal life, and this we the people of God in scorn called Quakers, do witness."*

In reply to Christopher Wade, who had asserted that "the Holy Ghost is a person, and that there was a trinity of three persons before Christ was born," George Fox says, "Thou knowest not him that is in the Father and the Father in him, glorified with the Father before the world began. And the scriptures doth not tell people of a trinity nor three persons, but the common-prayer mass-book speaks of three persons brought in by thy father the Pope; and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was always one." †

Priest Ferguson had asserted "that Christ and the Father, and the Holy Ghost are not one, but they are three, therefore distinct." George Fox replies, "This is the denying of Christ's doctrine, who saith, 'I and my Father are one;' and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and they are all one and not distinct, but one in unity; that which comes out from him leads the saints into all truth, (that ever was given forth from the spirit of truth,) and so up unto God the father of truth, and so goes back again from whence it came."‡

In a postscript to a treatise entitled "The Man Christ Jesus the Head of the Church, and true Mediator in opposition to the papist head, their Pope," &c.. George Fox says, "Christ is the head of his church that he gathered out of the whole world unto his name; and he is in the midst of them a prophet, and a priest, and a shepherd, and a bishop, and a counsellor, and a king to rule in the hearts of his church, and to exercise those offices in his church."§

Concerning the body of the Lord Jesus, George Fox remarks, that "some have been so bold as to say he is in heaven with a natural and carnal body; but these have been some of the grossest sort of professors. And the most sort of professors say he is in heaven with a humane body. But these are not scripture terms or names, for if your vile natural and human bodies must be changed, and made like unto his glorious body, then how can ye say that Christ is in heaven with a carnal, natural, or humane body?"‖

---

* George Fox's Doctrinals, 446; and Works, V. 126.

† George Fox's Great Mystery, 246; and Works, III. 397.

‡ Ibid, 293; and Works, III. 463.

§ Ibid, v. 434 to 454; Doctrinals, 714 and 718.

‖ George Fox's Works, V. 154; Doctrinals, 467.

"Christ's body is not carnal, but spiritual, the first man was of the earth — earthly, the second man is the Lord from heaven — heavenly, and is a glorious body,—and the saints are made like unto his glorious body: therefore the first state is carnal, the second glorious; so there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."*

Concerning the true light of Christ and his Divinity, George Fox says, "the Papist and Protestant teachers which do oppose the true light of Christ, which enlightens every man that comes into the world, which is the life in Christ, who, with their darkness cannot comprehend it, though it shines in their darkness, and are haters of the light, because their deeds are evil, and will not come to it because it will reprove them: and so close their eyes and stop their ears to the light, which is the life in Christ, and so will not hear with their ears nor see with their eyes. So they are not like to be converted to Christ, to heal them when they stop their ears to the divinity of Christ, namely, his light, the life in him, which Christ commands them to believe in and walk in; and yet without the light, the life in Christ, pretend to preach him in the flesh, and deny him in his divinity. And the apostle saith, "he had known Christ after the flesh, but henceforth he knew him so no more.' But what will the teachers, both of the Papists and Protestants say to this, that deny Christ the true light which enlightens every man that comes into the world?"†

From these, and many similar passages that might be quoted, we may conclude that although George Fox acknowledged the scripture doctrine of "Father, Word, and Holy Ghost," yet he rejected the term Trinity, and the idea of tri-personality.

The Word [or Logos] which "was in the beginning with God and was God," took flesh, or was manifest in the flesh. "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same," ‡ and "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." §

The body of Christ, glorified in heaven, is not carnal, but spiritual; and "the saints are made like unto his glorious body." He, "the man Christ Jesus, is the head of the Church and true mediator," who "gave himself, to be head over all things, to his church, which is his body."

The divinity of Christ is his light, ‖—the indwelling of divine power,—the divine Word (or Logos) which was, and is manifested in him,—and which, through him, gives life to all his members, for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." The eternal Word, or Holy Spirit, is the manifestation of God;—omnipresent, but invisible, yet made known to the quickened conscience as a reprover for sin;—a

* Works, III. 505; Great Mystery, 322.

† George Fox's Works, VI. 479; Doctrinals, 1085.

‡ Heb. ii. 14. § Phil. ii. 8.

‖ Works, VI. 479; III. 487; Doctrinals, 1085; Great Mystery, 310.

"spirit of judgment and a spirit of burning" to the guilty soul, but to the obedient and pure in heart, a comforter in righteousness.

THE ORIGINAL AND PRESENT STATE OF MAN.

In a treatise of George Fox, "concerning the living God of truth, and the world's God in whom there is no truth, and also, how man and woman fell from the living God, and how the serpent became the God of the world," &c., the following passages are found, to wit: "I say, as long as man and woman stood in God's counsel, and in obedience to his word, and wisdom, and power, by which all things were made and created, they stood in the perfect good and blessed estate, and in the dominion in God's righteous holy image and likeness, which did neither corrupt nor burden themselves nor the creation, but stood blessed and perfect in their good estate, which God, who is the only good, had placed them in." * * * *

"Now the devil, the serpent that abode not in the truth, who was an enemy to man's prosperity and happiness, that tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God Almighty had forbidden man and woman to eat of, and told them, "In the day that they did eat thereof, they should die,' that [tree] did the serpent make his text of to beguile and deceive man and woman with, which God had forbidden man and woman to eat of." * * * * "So he was the father of this lie which Eve and Adam believed, and so came under the curse and condemnation, and lost their blessed state; who, instead of having their eyes opened by disobeying God, the God of truth, the world's God out of truth blinded them."* * * *

"So thinking to be made wise they became fools, which brought the rod upon the back of them, which also comes upon all their posterity in the fall."†

"But the promise of God was to mankind, 'That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.' So here was the first promise of Christ, which all the faithful hoped for and believed in, for their resurrection out of that fallen estate." * * * *

"But ye may say that Adam and Eve were alive after this, else how could they have children afterwards? Yea, they were alive outwardly, but they died from the image and likeness of God, and righteousness and holiness which God Almighty made them in, and from that power, in which the Lord gave them dominion over all the works of his hands.

"So the Lord God said, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' But the serpent said, "If ye eat thereof ye shall not surely die.' And they did eat, and disobeyed the Lord's voice and command, and did surely die; and so death passed upon all men, and all died in Adam." * * * *

"Therefore, as Christ said, 'Go teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.' Seeing all was dead in Adam, and so plunged into death, by disobeying the Lord and hearkening unto the serpent." "So all must be baptized with the baptism of Christ, with fire and the Holy Ghost; and all their disobedience, transgression, sin and corruption; and their chaff must be plunged down and burnt up by the baptism of Christ, before they can come into the paradise of God, and have right to eat of the tree of life."‡

In a treatise entitled, "A distinction betwixt the prophets of God, Christ and his ministers, and the messengers of Satan," &c., George Fox says,

---

* Works of George Fox, VI. 4, 5, 9; Doctrinals, 720–1.

† Ibid, 723. ‡ Ibid, VI. 9, 10, 11; Doctrinals, 724–25.

"The Protestant priests, ministers and teachers, preach to the people, and teach them both in public and private, that they must carry a body of sin and a body of death, as long as they live on this side the grave; and none can be made free from sin and this body of death, as long as they live upon the earth." "And they have so riveted this doctrine into the people, of carrying a body of sin and death, and not being made free from it while upon the earth; that both the professors and the hearers, as well as the priests, plead for this body of sin, death and imperfection, while upon the earth; and many of the teachers and professors are so ignorant, that they say the outward body or creature of man and woman, is the outward body of sin and death; which doctrine is utterly false." . . . . After quoting Rom. viii. 19, 20, 21; and vi. 6, 7, 22, he adds: "So you may see here that the Romans, and the church of Christ and the apostles, as men and women were living, though the old man of sin was crucified."*

In discoursing with some persons in Ireland concerning election and reprobation, George Fox says, "I told them, though they judged our principle foolish, it was too high for them, and they could not with their wisdom comprehend it; therefore I would discourse with them according to their capacities. You say, said I, that God hath ordained the greatest part of men for hell, and that they were ordained so before the world began, for which your proof is in Jude. You say Esau was reprobated, and the Egyptians and the stock of Ham; but Christ saith to his disciples 'Go teach all nations,' and, 'Go unto all nations, and preach the gospel of life and salvation.' Now if they were to go to all nations, were they not to go to Ham's stock, and Esau's stock? Did not Christ die for all? Then for the stock of Ham, of Esau and the Egyptians. Doth not the scripture say, God would have all men to be saved?" * * * *

"And though the apostle speaks of God's loving Jacob and hating Esau, yet he tells the believers; "We all were by nature children of wrath, as well as others.' This includes the stock of Jacob, (of which the apostle himself was, and all believing Jews were.) And thus both Jews and Gentiles were all concluded under sin, and so under condemnation, that God might have mercy upon all through Jesus Christ. So the election and choice stands in Christ; 'and he that believes, is saved; and he that believes not, is condemned already.' And Jacob is the second birth which God loved, and both Jews and Gentiles must be born again before they can enter the kingdom of God. And when you are born again, ye will know election and reprobation; for the election stands in Christ the seed, before the world began; but the reprobation lies in the evil seed since the world began."†

From the passages above quoted, and others of similar import, it appears that George Fox rejected the doctrine of "original sin;" he believed that the death denounced against man for transgression, and experienced by the first human pair, was the loss or suspension of Divine life in the soul: "They died from the image and likeness of God, and from righteousness and holiness," . . . "which also comes upon all their posterity in the fall." That this fall from their first estate was caused by giving way to the evil suggestions of "the devil or serpent;"

* Ibid, VI. 436; Doctrinals, 1052.

† George Fox's Journal, American Edition, 1800, vol. II. p. 105–6; and London Edition, 1694, p. 331.

and that the first birth, otherwise called the natural man, "receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him." They who fulfil the lusts of the flesh are in a reprobate state, being children of wrath; but the election pertains to the second birth, for the promise is unto Christ the Seed, and to all who become "partakers of the Divine nature" through Him.

But although the animal propensities which lead to sin are inherent in man, yet "sin is not imputed where there is no law;"* and consequently no guilt is imputed to infants.

THE ATONEMENT OR RECONCILIATION.

George Fox was asked by priest Stevens, "why Christ cried out upon the cross, 'my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And why he said, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will, but thine be done?' and 'I told him,' he writes in his journal, 'at that time the sins of all mankind were upon him, and their iniquities and transgressions, with which he was wounded; which he was to bear and to be an offering for them, as he was man, but died not, as he was God. And so in that he died for all men, and tasted death for every man, he was an offering for the sins of the whole world. (This I spoke being at the time in a measure sensible of Christ's suffering, and what he went through."†)

In a paper "concerning the church of Christ," &c., he says, "Christ took upon him the seed of Abraham; he doth not say the corrupt seed of the Gentiles. So according to the flesh, he was of the holy seed of Abraham and David; and his holy body and blood was an offering and a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, as a Lamb without blemish, whose flesh saw no corruption. And so by the one offering of himself in the New Testament and New Covenant, he has put an end to all the offerings and sacrifices among the Jews in the Old Testament. And Christ, the Holy Seed, was crucified, dead and buried, according to the flesh, and raised again the third day; and his flesh saw no corruption. Though he was crucified in the flesh, yet quickened again by the spirit, and is alive, and liveth forevermore; and hath all power in heaven and earth given to him, and reigneth over all; and is the one mediator betwixt God and man, even the man Christ Jesus. And Christ said, 'he gave his flesh for the life of the world;' and the Apostle saith, 'his flesh saw no corruption;' so, that which saw no corruption, he gave for the life of the corrupt world to bring them out of corruption. And Christ said again, 'He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. And he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."‡

Thomas Collier having asserted in print, that 'If Christ doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world,' &c., if this were truth, then Christ died in vain, and in vain hath Christ spoke of himself, saying, 'I am the way, the truth, the life, the light,' &c. George Fox replies; "And none sees Christ the one offering, but with the light that cometh from him; nor none knows the Saviour Christ Jesus, but with the light that cometh from him; and that lets them see the body prepared, Christ who was the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, the one offering that ends all offerings; and

* Rom. v. 13. † Journal, I. 4; and London Edition, 1694, p. 4.

‡ Journal, II. 367-8; and London Edition, 1694, 555.

his blood that is the atonement which is the saints' drink, which who drinks shall live, with which their consciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God."*

In answer to Thomas Moore, George Fox says: "The blood of Christ which satisfies the Father which the saints drink, and his flesh which they eat, which in so doing [they] have life, is that which the world stumble at; which who drinks lives forever. And the Apostle preached the word of faith in their hearts, and in their mouths, and the word reconciles to the Father; and hammers down, and cuts down and burns that which separates from the Father; and over it gives the victory." †

Philip Taverner, an opposer of Friends, uses this language: "The light which is in every man is but darkness being compared with a revelation of Christ in the saints." "Our justification hath its rise from what Christ hath done and suffered for us, not from what he hath done in us. Justification and sanctification are ever distinct in their nature, distinct one from the other; justification is not sanctification, nor sanctification, justification; but two things really distinct in their nature."

George Fox replies, "The light which every man that cometh into the world is lightened withal, is Christ, and this light reveals Christ, and is the saints' light, and this light is condemnation to the world which hates it. And no man knoweth justification, but as he knoweth it wrought within from Christ, and no man knows the seed that was offered, the sacrifice of the whole world, but as he knows it within through the faith; and who are of the faith they are of Abraham, they are of the flesh of Christ, the flesh of him that suffered; and if men have not Christ within them, they have not justification; and though they may talk of him without, and have him not within, such are reprobates that have not Christ within them; reprobate from Christ, from justification and sanctification both, but are of the generation that caused him to suffer; and justification and sanctification are one, not distinguished the one from the other in their natures, but are one in nature, not two things really distinct in their nature, but really one, for Christ our sanctification and justification, is he that sanctifies and justifies; they are one in nature which is Christ, who is sanctification and justification both; and thou art rebuked which makes two of them and distinct, when it's but one thing, the same that justifies, sanctifies." ‡

Philip Taverner asserts, moreover, that "If the fulfilling of the righteous law in us be justification, then Christ died in vain."

George Fox rejoins, "He that fulfils the righteousness of the law in us, is Christ the justification; hereby men come to know him that he redeems them from under the law, and they are led by the spirit; and they know he is their intercession and died not in vain, and he ends the law who fulfils it. And he is the justification to every one that believes." ‡

William Jeffries, another opponent, said "The spirit of Antichrist denies Christ come in the flesh, and says the light within is Christ, when at the best it is but the light of nature." * * *

George Fox replies, "'the light which doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world,' is Christ, and none can confess him in truth, nor see him, nor lift him up, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, but who be in the light which cometh from him. And by this thou hast over-

* Works of George Fox, III. 212; Great Mystery, 121.

† Ibid, III. 227; Great Mystery, 131.

‡ George Fox's Works, III. 487–8; Great Mystery, 310.

thrown thyself; for them that confess the light in them to be Christ, (which Christ saith he is the light), these do not deny Christ come in the flesh."*

Among certain queries propounded to George Fox, and found in his tract called "Saul's errand to Damascus," one was, "whether a believer be justified by Christ's righteousness imputed, yea or no?"

He answered, "He that believeth is born of God; and he that is born of God is justified by Christ alone without imputation."†

Timothy Trevor, having asserted "that he that doth not preach the death and resurrection and the man Christ Jesus, that rose from the dead at Jerusalem, preacheth not the gospel, whatsoever else he doth declare."

George Fox answered, "He that preacheth Christ, must preach that Christ that died at Jerusalem, for he is the same to-day, yesterday and forever; the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, which seed, Christ, breaks the serpent's head, and destroys death and the devil that went out of the truth; and death being destroyed, the captivated one comes out by the power which is the gospel, and the prisoner of hope shows himself forth, and then the covenant of light and life is felt, and peace with God; but the reprobate, devil, death and destruction, antichrist, the beast and false prophet, may talk of Christ without, and he [be] not felt within; such are then the reprobates."‡

In a treatise entitled, "A distinction betwixt the prophets of God, Christ and his ministers, and the messengers of Satan," &c., he says, "Here you may see what men get by their outward knowledge; for when Adam and Eve fed upon the tree of knowledge, then the Lamb was slain in them from the foundation of the world; and when the Lamb Christ was manifest in the flesh, then they that were in this outward brutish knowledge and wisdom below, crucified Christ outwardly without the gates of Jerusalem; and after, when Christianity was spread up and down the world, and many got an outward form of christianity and denied the power, and got into this brutish outward knowledge and wisdom below, they crucified to themselves Christ afresh, as in Hebrews, vi. 6.§

In his treatise, "concerning the living God of truth," &c., he says: "So Christ gave gifts unto men, first unto his twelve and seventy, before he was crucified and ascended. And it is also clear, that Christ gives gifts unto men after he ascended, for the work of the ministry; and makes some evangelists, some pastors, some teachers, and some prophets, according to the Apostle's doctrine, Eph. iv."‖

The following query being propounded to him, viz: "whether Christ in the flesh be a figure or not; and if a figure, how and what? He answers, "Christ is the substance of all figures, and his flesh is a figure; for every one passeth through the same way as he did, who comes to know Christ in the flesh; there must be a suffering with him before there can be a rejoicing with him. Christ is an example for all to walk after, and if thou knowest what an example is, thou wouldst know what a figure is to come up to the same fulness."¶

In a paper entitled, "The man Christ Jesus the head of the church, and

---

* Works of George Fox, III. 246; Great Mystery, 144.

† Saul's Errand to Damascus, London Edition, 1654, p. 12; George Fox's Works, III.

‡ Works of George Fox, III. 509; Great Mystery, 325.

§ Ibid, VI. 448; Doctrinals, 1062.

‖ Works of George Fox, VI. 22; Doctrinals, 733.

¶ Works of George Fox, III. 596-7; Saul's Errand to Damascus, p. 12.

true mediator, in opposition to the Papist head, their Pope," &c., George Fox says, "Now it's clear, there is but one mediator betwixt God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who is head of his church; and whosoever hath set up, or do set up other mediators betwixt God and man, than the man Christ Jesus, are in the apostacy from the Apostles' doctrine, and follow their own doctrines, and not the apostolical doctrine; for he is the one mediator betwixt God and man, the one eternal, living God, creator of all, and Christ Jesus, by whom were all things, who gave himself a ransom for all men; he is the alone one mediator betwixt God and man, who is the only head of his church, and his church do testify him so to be, that are come to Jesus their mediator; who hath made their peace betwixt them and God, and so hath received him; who is come, and hath given them an understanding to know him; and they that have him, have life everlasting." *

From these passages, and others to be cited in the sequel, we cannot avoid the conclusion that George Fox rejected the commonly received doctrine of satisfaction or vicarious atonement. He did not believe in imputative righteousness, nor that Christ died as a substitute to satisfy the justice, or appease the wrath of God.

He said to priest Stevens, that "the sins of all mankind were upon Christ, with which he was wounded, and to be an offering for as he was man, but died not as he was God." "He tasted death for every man," and "this I spoke," he says, "being at the time in a measure sensible of Christ's sufferings," which shows that he considered them inward and spiritual, being grieved and burdened with a deep sense of the sins of the world.

We have seen that he speaks of "the blood of Christ which satisfies the Father, and which the saints drink;" also of "the word of faith in their hearts and in their mouths, which reconciles to the Father." The reconciliation or atonement is wrought in man, for "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." There can be no change in Deity.

Therefore "Christ's blood, which is the atonement, is the saints' drink;" † it is spiritual, and it "purges the conscience," which nothing outward can do.

This "blood or life of Christ Jesus is the alone atonement unto God," ‡ the only thing that can produce that change in man which reconciles him to his heavenly Father.

Justification is wrought within by the spirit of Christ, for man must be made just, before he can be accounted so by the righteous Judge of heaven and earth.

Sanctification and justification are of one nature and from one cause: "So far as a man is sanctified, so far is he justified and no farther, for the same that sanctifies a man justifies him, for the same that

* George Fox's Works, V. 454; Doctrinals, 717.

† Works of George Fox, III. 212. Great Myst. 121.

‡ Ibid, V. 365. Doctrinals, 646.

is his sanctification, is his justification, and his wisdom, and his redemption." He that knows one of them, knows all, he that doth not feel one of them, feels none of them at all, for they are all one."*

Now it is admitted by all, that sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit in man, and it is clear from the above expressions of George Fox, that he attributed justification and redemption to the same inward work of Divine Power.

Nevertheless, he expressed a grateful sense of the benefit derived from Christ's work and sufferings without us, when he came in that "body prepared," to do his Father's will. "By the one offering of himself in the New Testament and New Covenant, he has put an end to all the offerings and sacrifices among the Jews in the Old Testament."†

There can be no doubt that his obedience in thus suffering for us and for all mankind, was acceptable to the Father, although his death brought stupendous judgments on those who caused him to suffer.

After the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, there was a more abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit, which the Apostles attributed to his mediation.

"Being," says Peter, "by the right hand of God, exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."

In a paper of George Fox, "concerning Christ the spiritual and Holy Head over his Holy church," he says, "Christ gathers into one, them that are scattered abroad, he who is the head of the church. For as Moses said, 'like unto me will God raise up a prophet, him shall ye hear. So all are to hear him, and believe in him for life and salvation. Now Christ, who was the holy offering and sacrifice, hath tasted death for every man: so every man may have comfort here, if they believe in the light, which is the life in the word, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

"And he is a 'propitiation for the sins of the whole world,' and not only for the saints, the churches.'‡

From these expressions, it is evident that George Fox considered Christ as he is the eternal Word, "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" to be the "propitiation," the means of securing Divine favour, to all who believe and obey him.

He also held forth the holy Jesus, as an example for all believers.

---

* George Fox's Works, III. 450. Great Mystery, 284.

† Journal, II. 367–8.

‡ Doctrinals, 586. Works of George Fox, V. 292.

"Christ, in his people," he says, "is the substance of all figures, types, and shadows, fulfilling them in them, and setting them free from them; but as he is held forth in the scripture letter without them, and in the flesh without them, he is their example or figure, which are both one, that the same things might be fulfilled in them that were in Christ Jesus: 'For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps: forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.'

"Christ was our example in suffering and in holiness, and 'as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation, because it is written, be ye holy, as I am holy.' "*

In order to elucidate more fully the views of George Fox, the doctrinal part of his letter to the governor and council of Barbadoes is here presented in parallel columns, with selections of other passages from his works.

LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BARBADOES.

"Whereas many scandalous lies and slanders have been cast upon us, to render us odious; as that we do deny God and Christ Jesus, and the scripture of truth," &c.

This is to inform you, that all our books and declarations, which, for these many years, have been published to the world, do clearly testify the contrary.

Yet, notwithstanding, for your satisfaction, we do now plainly and sincerely declare,

1. "That we do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, who is the creator of all things both in heaven and in the earth, and the preserver of all that he hath made; who is God over all, blessed forever; to whom be all honour and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and forevermore! And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ, his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

EXTRACTS FROM WORKS OF G. FOX.

1. "So the blood of the Old Covenant was the life of the beasts and other creatures; and the blood of the New Covenant is the life of Christ Jesus, who saith, 'except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye have no life in you.' So the blood of the New Covenant is not according to the Old: and so with this blood of the New Covenant must every one feel their hearts sprinkled, if they have life; and in this New Covenant they shall all know the Lord, &c. And by this blood of Jesus, his life in the New Covenant, they are justified, in whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins; and Christ hath purchased his church with his own blood, his life, and their faith doth stand in his blood, which is the life of the Lamb.

Therefore, the Apostle saith, 'If ye walk in the light as he is in the light, then have ye fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ Jesus, his Son, cleanseth from all sin.' "†

* Saul's Errand to Damascus, p. 8, and George Fox's Works, III. 592–3.

† Vol. V. 363–4; Doctrinals, 644–5.

2. "Who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers; all things were created by him."

2. "Now all you that do profess Christ in words, and have a profession of him in the flesh, and deny him in his light, in his Divinity 'which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world,' hear what Christ saith, 'Believe in the light;' and John, speaking of Christ, saith, 'In him was life, and this life was the light of men; and the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not; and that was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not: he came to his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed in his name.'" * * * *

"And what is his name? The Light, the Word, Jesus, the Saviour, Christ, the anointed of God, conceived by the Holy Ghost," &c.*

3. "And we do own and believe, that he was a sacrifice for sin who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. And that he was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem;"

3. "The saints are the temples of God, and God dwells in them, and walks in them; and they come to witness the flesh of Christ, and they glorify him in their souls and bodies, and the Lord is glorified in their bringing forth much fruit. And they witness the seed, the one offering for sin and transgression, to be manifest within; and such are not reprobates that witness the one offering, Christ Jesus; and them that have not him within, they are reprobates."†

"And so all the believers in the light, are the children of the light, and are grafted into Christ that died for them; and eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the heavenly man, and so feeds upon Christ Jesus their sacrifice. And so all the circumcised in heart, men and women, feed upon the sacrifice, and are the royal priesthood offering up spiritual sacrifices."‡

---

* Vol. V. p. 198; Doctrinals, 504.

† Vol. III. 233; Great Mystery, 135.

‡ Vol. V. p. 266; Doctrinals, 560.

4. "and that he was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of his Father, for our justification."

4. "And no man knoweth justification, but as he knoweth it wrought within from Christ, and no man knows the seed that was offered, the sacrifice for the whole world; but as he knows it within through the faith, and who are of the faith they are of Abraham, they are of the flesh of Christ, the flesh of him that suffered."*

5. "And we do believe that he ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God."

5. "So if the 'vile body' be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body, it is not the same, and consequently do not ye undervalue the Lord Jesus Christ and his body, ye that are giving such by-names to his body, as humane and humanity. Yea, some have been so bold as to say that he is in heaven with a natural and carnal body, but these have been some of the grossest sort of professors."†

6. "This Jesus who was the foundation of the holy prophets and Apostles, is our foundation, and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid, but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus;"

6. "None sees Christ the one offering, but with the light which cometh from him, nor none knows the Saviour Christ Jesus but with the light which cometh from him; and that lets see the body prepared, Christ who was the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh, the one offering that ends all offerings; and his blood that is the atonement which is the saints' drink, which who drinks it shall live, with which their consciences are purged from dead works to serve the living God. And no one knows the foundation of God that standeth sure, nor feels it, nor sees it, but with the light which cometh from Christ, the foundation, that breaks down all other foundations; which light that every man is enlightened withal, gives him the knowledge of the foundation of God."‡

7. "who we believe tasted death for every man, and shed his blood for all men, and is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. According as John the Bap-

7. "Whosoever hath not Christ within, are reprobates, and whosoever hath Christ within, hath the righteousness.

"Now Christ that suffered, Christ that was offered up, is manifest

* Vol. III. p. 487; Great Mystery, 310.

† Vol. V. p. 154; Doctrinals, 467. ‡ Vol. III. p. 212; Great Mystery, 121.

tist testified of him, when he said; 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.'" John i. 29.

8. "We believe that he alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our Salvation, (who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works); who is the seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, viz., Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last."

9. "That he is, (as the scriptures of truth say of him), our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved.

"It is he alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; he it is who is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of, saying; 'a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you; and it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.'" Acts ii. 22, 23.

within, and the saints are of his flesh and of his bone, and eat his flesh and drink his blood, and not another. The Christ that ended the priesthood ended the offering, ended the temple, ended the law and the first covenant; the seed of God Christ Jesus, this [is] manifest within; he that hath him, hath life, justification, sanctification and redemption." * * * * "And none lifts up the Son of God, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness; but as every one is in the light that the Son of God hath enlightened him withal, and then they know him that draws all men after him."*

8. "But the seed of the woman is come that bruises the serpent's head, in which seed, Christ, all nations are blessed.

"And all you who live and walk in this seed, you live in him that bruises the serpent's head, that liar, tempter and questioner; yea, and every one by this seed Christ, may be renewed up into the image of God, as Adam and Eve were in, from the beginning."† . . .

9. "And I say, none come to witness salvation, and to be saved, but who witness Christ within, their sanctification, justification and redemption, and the others are reprobates. And all upon the earth that can talk of a righteousness without them, and sanctification and justification without them, and a Christ without them and not within them, they are reprobates; for Christ is the righteousness of God, and the sanctification and the justification of man, from the law and its works, who stands between God and man. So he is the redemption who redeems man out of the fall which he fell into, and he doth sanctify him, and he doth justify him, and this is all found within; and this not being found within, he is reprobate. And so none are saved but who witnesseth this within." ‡

* Vol. III. 227–8; Great Mystery, 131–32.

† Vol. VIII. 243; George Fox's Epistles, London, 1698, p. 499.

‡ Vol. III. p. 293; Great Mystery, 175.

10. "He it is that is now come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and he rules in our hearts by his law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death, and we have no life but by him; for he is the quickening spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven; by whose blood we are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works, to serve the living God."

11. "And he is our mediator that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended, and us offending; he being the oath of God, the New Covenant of light, life, grace and peace, the author and finisher of our faith. Now, this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel God with us, we all own and believe in; him whom the high-priest raged against, and said he had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and the elders of the Jews took counsel together against, and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason; who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach an horrible lie, namely, 'That his disciples came and stole him away by night whilst they slept.' And after he was risen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth, how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and his resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation."

10. "The First Covenant was dedicated with the blood, which was the life of all flesh; but the New and Second Covenant is dedicated with the blood, the life of Christ Jesus, which is the alone atonement unto God, by which all his people are washed, sanctified, cleansed and redeemed to God; so that their faith and testimony stands in the blood of the Lamb, the Life of Christ Jesus, fore-ordained before the world was, a Lamb without blemish, guile, spot or sin, which cleanseth from all spots or sin, and washes and makes clean the garments."*

11. "I say, none knows him as a mediator and a lawgiver, nor an offering, nor his blood that cleanseth them, but as they know him working in them, and they be in the sophistry of their divinity that know not the glory of the grace of Christ working in them."†

"None know the atonement of Christ but by the light within, and all be in the mystery of iniquity that be out of the light which cometh from Christ, the Covenant of God to Jews and Gentiles, and that 'gives them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus.'"

"Mark! he saith, 'the light is that which gives the knowledge; and the light within doth set up another atonement; but they that do deny the light within, set up another atonement than Christ.'"‡

12. And as concerning the holy scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the scripture itself declares, 2 Peter, i. 21,) "spake as they were moved

* Vol. V. p. 365; Doctrinals, 646.

† Vol. III. 119–20; Great Mystery, 58.

‡ Vol. III. p. 121; Great Mystery, 59.

by the Holy Ghost.' We believed, they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled, (he that fulfils them is Christ); and they are profitable 'for reproof, for doctrine, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' (2 Tim. iii. 10,) 'and are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.'

"And we do believe that the holy scriptures are the words of God; for it is said in Exodus, xx. 1, 'God spake all these words, saying,' &c., meaning the ten commandments given forth upon Mount Sinai. And in Rev. xxii. 18, saith John, 'I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; if any man addeth unto these, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy,' (not the word,) &c. So in Luke, i. 20, 'Because thou believest not my words.' And in John v. 47, xv. 7, xiv. 23, xii. 47. So that we call the holy scriptures, as Christ and the Apostles called them, and holy men of God called them, viz: the words of God." *

[The remainder of this letter relates chiefly to a slander cast upon Friends, "that they taught the negroes to rebel," which George Fox declares is "a most abominable untruth." See 325th page of this work, where the substance of it is given.]

SUMMARY.

The copious selections here given will enable the reader to form his own judgment on the points embraced in them.

The author now offers a summary of what he apprehends were the views of George Fox on certain controverted points of doctrine.

1. God is one, spiritual, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent being, who has existed from all eternity, and is perfect in wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy, and truth.

2. When, "in the beginning," he put forth his wisdom and power, saying, "Let there be light;" this creative "WORD" by which he spoke the worlds into being, was an emanation from himself, a manifestation of his wisdom and power, for "in the beginning was the Word [Logos,] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

3. The same holy and divine Word was manifested in our first parents, as their light and life; and while they were obedient to His teachings, they were preserved in the divine image in which they were created, but when they listened to the tempter, and transgressed the law, they fell, and became "carnally minded," which "is death."

4. Infants do not inherit from Adam any guilt or sin, for "sin is the transgression of the law,"† and, "sin is not imputed where there is no law."‡

Nevertheless we do inherit animal appetites, which, if not restrained through obedience to the dictates of Divine grace, will lead to sin; and

* Journal of George Fox, II. 138 to 141, and London edition, 1694, p. 358.

† 1 John iii. 4. ‡ Rom. v. 13.

this carnal nature is the first-birth, or earliest development in man; for "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual." 1 Cor. xv. 46. In order that man may become a child of God, he must be "born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word [or Spirit] of God, that liveth and abideth forever." 1 Pet. i. 23, 15. He thus becomes "a partaker of the divine nature."

5. The Eternal Word, or Spirit of Christ was with the children of Israel in the wilderness, for, "they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."*

He was also manifested to the inspired prophets, for in them "the spirit of Christ," "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."†

6. But the most full and glorious manifestation of the Divine Word or Logos, was in Jesus Christ the immaculate Son of God. In him the manhood, or son of man, was entirely subject to the Divinity.

The Word that was in the beginning took flesh, or "was manifested in the flesh." "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham."‡ "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." Rom. ix. 5. There was in him no corruption, and the spirit of evil could have no power over him, as he said himself, "the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me."§

7. The object of his coming is thus stated by himself. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."‖ The apostle Paul testifies that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."¶ And John writes, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil."**

8. Being, "in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin,"†† he was an example to all succeeding generations, "a man approved of God by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did by him."‡‡ His powerful preaching, his wonderful miracles, his patience under suffering, and his triumphant resurrection, are to be attributed to the Divine Word, or Logos, who dwelt in him. He said, "the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works,"§§ "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."‖‖‖

9. His agony in the garden of Gethsemane was doubtless occasioned by the sense he had of the sins of mankind, the burden of which lay upon him, and induced him to say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful

* 1 Cor. x. 4. † 1 Pet. i. 11. ‡ Heb. ii. 16. § John xiv. 30.
‖ John xviii. 37. ¶ II. Cor. v. 19. ** 1 John iii. 8. †† Heb. iv. 5.
‡‡ Acts ii. 22. §§ John xiv. 10. ‖‖‖ John xiv. 30.

unto death."* He was "baptized into death," he entered into sympathy and suffering for a fallen world, "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."† His obedience in drinking the cup of suffering was acceptable to God, for he "hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." ‡

Before his crucifixion it was said, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."§ That is, it was not poured forth so abundantly as on the day of Pentecost. But after his resurrection, "he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."‖ "Therefore," said Peter, "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."**

It may therefore be truly said that he is our "propitiation," "the mediator of the new covenant," through whom favour is received.

10. "By him we have now received the atonement,"†† that is, the reconciliation; for says the apostle, "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."‡‡ It is therefore the life, or in-dwelling power of Christ, that saves from sin; "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes free from the law of sin and death."§§ "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."‖‖‖

11. Man has therefore no ability of his own to save himself or his fellow-man; for although the believers were exhorted by the apostle to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, "nevertheless," he adds, "it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."***

We must wait for the influence of his grace, and when we co-operate therewith, he will enable us to overcome our spiritual enemies; he will feed us with food convenient for us, even that spiritual food that comes down from heaven, and gives life to the soul. This is referred to by the Lord Jesus as his flesh and his blood, being the substance and the life communicated through him to every living member of his body, which is the church.

12. The intimate union between Christ and his church is illustrated,

---

* Mark xiv. 34. † Phil. ii. 8. ‡ Eph. v. 2. § John vii. 39.
‖ Eph. iv. 8. ** Acts ii. 33. †† Rom. v. 2. ‡‡ Rom. v. 10.
§§ Rom. vii. 2. ‖‖‖ Titus iii. 5–7. *** Phil. ii. 12, 13.

in the epistles of Peter and Paul, by two striking similitudes. One is that of a body having many members, of which Jesus Christ is the head;* the other, that of a temple, of which he is the chief corner-stone.† Now it is obvious that the head must be connected with the body, and the chief corner-stone is a part of the building. Therefore the conclusion appears to be inevitable, that the holy manhood of Christ —that is, the soul of him in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt without measure — is now, and always will be, the head or chief member of that spiritual body which is made up of the faithful servants of God of all ages and nations.

13. This view does not militate against the Divinity of Christ, which is his light and life — the indwelling of divine power — the Word or Logos which was and is manifested in him, and which through him gives life to all his members, for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," and "of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." The life is often called in the scriptures the blood, for "the blood is the life," or "the life is in the blood;" and as in the natural body the blood conveys nourishment to every part, and sustains life in it, so in the spiritual body every living member is sustained by the life or blood of the Son of God. "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

14. Holding these views, George Fox truly declared his belief in the scripture testimony concerning the divinity of Christ and his Sonship, his dying for the sins of the whole world, his acceptable offering or sacrifice, his being our propitiation and mediator with the Father.

15. Nevertheless, I think it may be safely asserted that he rejected the incongruous and gross ideas generally connected with the doctrine of the Trinity, to wit: That there are three separate and distinct persons in the Godhead,—that the second of these persons, the Son, consented to make satisfaction to the first person, the Father, by being put to death, in order to appease his wrath or satisfy his justice, as a substitute for guilty man,—and that the Father having imputed our sin to the Son, and inflicted on him the penalty, now imputes his righteousness to us, if we rely upon his merits.

These unscriptural doctrines I find controverted in a document entitled "The Ancient Testimony of the Society of Friends," issued in Philadelphia, in 1843, by the Yearly Meeting held at Mulberry street:—

"These devoted ministers of the gospel, [George Fox and others], as it was opened to them in the primitive purity, accordingly preached in life and doctrine the indispensable necessity of holiness, without which no man

* Eph. iv. 15. Col. i. 8. Rom. xii. 4. I. Cor. xii. 12.
† I. Pet. ii. 5, and 20—22.

shall see the Lord; and they placed justification where the apostle placed it, in connexion with being washed and sanctified, but not as preceding sanctification.

"When they went forth in their ministry, they found the different professors pleading for the impracticability of being free from sin in this life, while they considered themselves justified by faith in the Lord Jesus; alleging that our sins were imputed to him; that he suffered, instead of us, the penalty of infinite wrath and vengeance due to our sins, and thereby fully satisfied divine justice; and they rested in the false hope that though they lived in sin, Christ was their surety, and they were saved by his imputed righteousness.

"They argued that, as God has made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; therefore, as our sin is imputed to Christ, who had no sin, so Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, without our being righteous.

"Friends bore a decided testimony against this sin-pleasing doctrine, declaring that, were the sentiment admitted that God was so reconciled with men as to esteem them just while they were unjust and continuing in sin, he would have no controversy with them, which would make void the great practical doctrines of repentance, conversion, and regeneration. Though Christ bore our sins, and among men was accounted a sinner, yet they denied that God ever reputed him a sinner, or that he died that we should be reputed righteous, though no more really so than he was a sinner.

"They understood the apostle when he speaks of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ, to mean that we are to be made really righteous, and not by imputation merely; for he argues against any agreement between righteousness and unrighteousness, light and darkness. Our Lord, in all his doctrines and precepts, enforces the necessity of good works; and although, properly speaking, we are not justified for them, yet we are justified in them, agreeably to the Apostle James, 'Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.' 'For as the body without the spirit is dead, even so faith without works is dead also.'"

SUPPLEMENT.

In addition to the doctrines examined in the foregoing pages, there were others held by George Fox and the early Friends, wherein they differed from most other professors of Christianity, but concerning which there is little diversity of sentiment among those who claim the name of Friends. The most prominent of these were his views on Christian Perfection, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

ON PERFECTION.

In the narrative of his life, we have seen that his mind was early impressed with the necessity of seeking after that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Salvation is not merely an exemption from the punishment due to sin, but consists in being delivered from the power and dominion of evil.

The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover the deformity of sin, but a fountain of healing waters to purify the soul.

In the writings of George Fox, there are many passages asserting the doctrine of Perfection; thus he says, "Christ, who is the first and last, sets man free, and is the resurrection of the just and unjust, the judge of the quick and dead; and they that are in him, are invested with everlasting rest and peace, out of all the labours and travails and miseries of Adam in the fall." * So that all in Christ may be always fresh and green; for he is the green tree that never withers; all are fresh and green that are grafted into him, and abide in him fresh and green, and bring forth heavenly, fresh fruits to the praise of God. And though Adam and Eve fell from paradise, the Jews fell from the law of God, and many of the Christians fell from their prophecies, and erred from the faith, and the spirit, and the grace; and the stars have fallen, as was spoken of in the Revelations, yet the spirit, grace, faith, and power of God remains." †

The doctrine of Christian perfection is neither more nor less than unreserved obedience to the divine will, through perfect love to God, which preserves the soul from the practice of sinning. The "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," can make us "free from the law of sin and death;" and through the operation of its sanctifying power, we may be "raised into newness of life," and become "partakers of the divine nature." This state of entire obedience and perfect love admits, however, of a growth in the truth; for even in the most advanced stage of Christian experience, there is still much to be learned, and continual need of watchfulness and prayer.

The example of the wise and good of every age, proves conclusively, that they who attain to the highest advancement in the spiritual life, are least disposed to claim any merit of their own; for, being admitted to a nearer view of the divine perfections, they are led to think more humbly of themselves. This state of mind is beautifully illustrated in the description of the righteous when brought before the judgment-seat of Christ: "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick and in prison, and came unto thee?' And the king shall answer and say unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

BAPTISM.

It appears to have been the great work of George Fox and the early Friends, to draw the attention of mankind from a reliance upon the outward form, to an experience of the inward power of religion.

They believed that the kingdom of Christ is the reign of God established in the soul, and that his baptism and supper are not material,

* Journal, II. 124, and London edition, 1694, p. 346.

† Ibid. 206. Idem. p. 412.

but spiritual; being the substance typified by the "divers washings" under the law, the water baptism of John, and the Jewish passover.

In the primitive Christian church, the converts from Judaism were long tenacious of the rites in which they had been educated. In relation to them, George Fox remarks:

"The apostle indeed was very tender of the people, while he saw them walk in simplicity, as in the case of those that were scrupulous about meats and days; but when the apostle saw that some drew them into the observation of days, and to settle in such things; he then reproves them sharply, and asks them, 'Who had bewitched them?'" . . . . "In like manner he was tender concerning the baptizing with water; but when he saw they began to make sects about it, some crying up Paul, others Apollos, he judged them, and called them carnal, and thanks God he had baptized no more but such and such; declaring plainly that he was sent to preach the gospel, and not to baptize; and brought them to the one baptism by the one spirit, into the one body which Christ, the spiritual man, is the head of; and exhorted the church, 'All to drink into that one spirit.' For he asserted in the church the one faith, which Christ was the author of; and one baptism, which was that of the spirit into one body; and one Lord Jesus Christ, who was the spiritual baptizer, who John said should come after him."*

The principal arguments generally advanced for water baptism, I propose briefly to examine.

First. The example of Jesus Christ and his disciples is adduced to prove, that this is an ordinance intended to be perpetuated in the Christian church. For, it is said, he not only submitted to be baptized by John, but that his disciples, while he was with them, baptized more than John, and even after his ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, they still adhered to the practice of baptizing proselytes.

In answer to this argument, it may be shown that he and his disciples conformed not only to the dispensation of John, who was his forerunner, but to that of Moses. He kept the Jewish festivals, and doubtless conformed to the whole Mosaic law; for he directed the man whom he had healed of leprosy, to go and show himself to the priest, and to offer for his cleansing those things that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. He also said to his disciples, and to the people, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not after their works, for they say and do not."

In like manner he submitted to the water baptism of John, which was of divine appointment, but intended, like the ritual of the law, to pass away, and give place to the more glorious dispensation of the gospel.

While John was baptizing at Ænon, Jesus and his disciples came

* Journal, New York Edition of 1800, Vol. I., p. 284–5; and London Edition, 1694, p. 229.

unto the land of Judea and baptized, that is to say, the disciples baptized, for the evangelist states expressly, "that Jesus himself baptized not." (John iv. 2) .... "And when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea, and departed into Galilee." Here we may observe, the sacred historian does not say he baptized more than John, but that the Pharisees had heard such a report, and on hearing of it, Jesus removed into another place, as if to contradict it. The report was evidently false; for how could his disciples, while in Judea, have baptized more than John, seeing that "Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were baptized of him in Jordan"?

As Christ, while in the flesh with his disciples, had kept the law, and commanded them to observe it, and had likewise submitted to the baptism of John, and permitted them to administer it, so, after his resurrection, they continued to keep the ceremonial law, and to administer the water baptism of John, at least for a time.

When Paul went up to Jerusalem, about twenty-seven years after the ascension of Christ, the disciples said to him, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law." And Paul condescended to their prejudices so far as to purify himself, and to enter, with four others, into the temple, "until an offering should be offered for every one of them." It appears, further, that Peter was so filled with Jewish prejudices, eight years after the ascension of Christ, that it required a remarkable vision to convince him that he ought to go into the house of Cornelius, to preach the gospel; and after he had done so, "They of the circumcision contended with him, saying, 'Thou wentest in unto men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.'"

We are informed, moreover, that when Peter came to Antioch, Paul "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision."

Water baptism had been in use among the Jews for the admission of proselytes,* and after the coming of John the Baptist, it was held in still higher esteem; "for all men counted John that he was a prophet

* "Baptism has been supposed by many learned persons to have had its origin from the Jewish church, in which, they maintain, it was the practice, long before Christ's time, to baptize proselytes or converts to their faith as part of the ceremony of their admission. 'It is strange to me,' says Dr. Doddridge, 'that any man should doubt of this, when it is plain, from express passages in the Jewish law, that no Jew who had lived like a Gentile for one day, could be restored to the communion of his church without it.'" — Buck's Theo. Dict.

indeed." It is therefore not surprising that some of the apostles should have administered this rite to their early proselytes even after these had received the baptism of the spirit, as in the case of Cornelius; but it was obviously going back to the dispensation of John, after they had attained to the higher dispensation of Christ. John said of Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease," which undoubtedly applied to the two dispensations; for as the disciples became acquainted with the substance and the life, they were not to go back to the "beggarly elements." "Are ye so foolish?" said Paul to the Galatians; "having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

Among the primitive christians, water baptism was called the baptism of John; in contradistinction, no doubt, to the spiritual baptism of Christ. Thus it is said, "Apollos was an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures." . . . . "and he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John." . . . . "Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Again, we read that Paul said to certain disciples at Ephesus, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." He inquired, "Unto what then were ye baptized?" and they said, "Unto John's baptism." Then said Paul, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance; saying unto the people, they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

It may, perhaps, be concluded by some, that in this instance Paul had them again baptized in water, merely using a different form of words, which is an inference not clearly sustained by the text; but if he did so, it must have been in condescension to the feelings or opinions of others, for he acknowledged that he had no commission to administer that rite. After alluding to the contentions of the disciples at Corinth, he thanks God that he had baptized but few among them, whom he names, and then he declares emphatically, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." 1 Cor. i. 17.

As Paul planted more churches than any of the apostles, there is good reason to conclude that very few of his proselytes from among the Gentiles received the rite of water-baptism, and hence the example of the primitive church was far from being uniformly in favour of this rite.

It was evidently the design of the blessed Jesus, by means of his example, his precepts, his sufferings, and the effusion of the Holy

Spirit, to lead his disciples from the outward form to the inward life of religion; and thus, when the typical dispensation was fulfilled in them, as it had been in their Divine master, they would come to see that Christ has disannulled and blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances, nailing it to his cross."

It is manifest from the writings of the apostle Paul, that he attained to this state; and he queries with the Colossians, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?"

Secondly. The authority for the perpetuity of water baptism is deduced from the commission of Christ to his apostles: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. xxviii. 19.

In reply to the inference usually drawn from this text, it may be observed that water is not mentioned therein; and the word 'baptizing' does not necessarily imply the use of water. The inquiry therefore arises, What baptism did Christ authorise his disciples to administer? Was it his own spiritual baptism, or the typical baptism of John? We may remember, John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

And our Saviour, after his resurrection, said to his disciples, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Here are mentioned two kinds of baptism: one pertaining to the dispensation of John, the other to the dispensation of Christ.

It may be objected that no man can baptize with the Holy Ghost. But there are numerous instances mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, where, through their ministry, or the laying-on of their hands, the Holy Ghost was given. They had no such power of their own, but were instruments in the Divine hand. It is equally true that no man can preach the gospel without Divine assistance; and when the gospel is preached "in the demonstration of the spirit and of power," it has, on those who are willing to receive it, a baptizing effect; it brings them under the influence of that holy and Divine power which is signified by the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In the scriptures, the name of the Lord is often used as synonymous with his presence and power; as, for example, "Thy name is as ointment poured forth;" "That thy name is near, thy works declare;" "The name of the Lord is a strong tower;" "By what power or by what name have ye done this?" "And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong;" "Repent and be baptized every

one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ." To be baptized in the name of Christ, is to be brought under the influence of his spirit; "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." Cor. xii. 13. It is worthy of note, that the Greek particle (εις), translated "into," in this text, and also in Rom. vi. 3, is the same that occurs in Matt. xxviii. 19, which may very properly be rendered, "Baptizing them *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If baptism in water had been intended in this commission, we might suppose a literal and exact compliance with the form would have been observed; but we do not read that it was so observed by the apostles in any instance. When they administered the rite, it was in the name of the Lord, or the name of Jesus Christ.

The language in which Mark records this commission, corroborates the view I have taken of it. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Here salvation is made dependent upon belief and baptism; but water not being mentioned, we have no reason to suppose it was intended. On the contrary, there are conclusive reasons for believing it was not material, but spiritual baptism to which he alluded; for this alone can save the soul. Peter tells us plainly that water baptism does not save; for, after speaking of the eight souls "saved by water," in the ark, he says "the like figure [or rather the anti-type*] whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Simon Magus believed and was baptized with water, but not with the Holy Ghost; yet he was so far from being saved, that Peter told him "he was in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity."

Paul attributes salvation to "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." He says, moreover, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," which certainly implies a change of heart, that no outward baptism could effect.

Thirdly. The advocates of water baptism cite in proof of their doctrine the expression of Christ, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Here the context shows that he was not treating of baptism, but of the new birth; and he adds, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh,

---

* Anti-type, the original word, should have been retained here: it means, "That of which the type is the representative."—JOHNSON.

and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Water is coupled with the spirit to illustrate its purifying operation, in like manner as fire is coupled with it in the description of Christ's baptism, "He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." It cannot be supposed that material fire is here intended, and there is no more reason to conclude that material water is alluded to in the text under consideration. The water which changes the heart is synonymous with the Holy Spirit,—it is that living water which, whosoever drinketh, shall never thirst.

Fourthly. It is argued that, as circumcision was the seal of the old covenant, water baptism is the seal of the new covenant, and the rite prescribed for the admission of members into the church. But there is no scriptural authority for this conclusion; the only seal of the new covenant mentioned by Christ or his apostles is, "The Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." The only badge of discipleship required by the Divine Teacher consisted of the fruits of the spirit. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Under the christian dispensation there are not two baptisms, but one only, as the Apostle Paul testifies, "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Can there be any doubt that this is the spiritual baptism of Christ, comparable to "unquenchable fire," which burns up the chaff, while the wheat is gathered into the garner? or like the refiner's furnace, in which the dross and tin are consumed, while the pure gold remains and constitutes the treasure of the heavenly kingdom?"

If water-baptism be a christian ordinance, as many allege, the inquiry may arise, Who is divinely appointed to administer it? Shall we go to those priests who claim the right by apostolic succession, when we know that the Papal hierarchy, through which they pretend to derive it, was utterly corrupt and apostate for a thousand years? Or shall we admit the plea that a commission to preach, derived from human ordination, includes authority to baptize; when we read in the scriptures that the apostle Paul, who had a real commission from on high to preach the gospel, was not sent to baptize with water?

Let us consider, moreover, how many millions of infants die without water-baptism. Can we suppose that all these are lost for want of a rite which they were not capable of desiring or appreciating? There is, in the scriptures, no instance mentioned of infants being thus baptized, nor indeed of adults, born of Christian parents. These were considered already members of the church, by birthright, as may be inferred from the language of Paul. "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." 1 Cor. vii. 14.

In many cases, but probably not in all, water-baptism was administered to proselytes from among the Jews and heathens, in conformity with a usage among the Jews, and likewise in accordance with the example of John the Baptist; hence it was called John's baptism. There is no evidence that it was an institution of Christ, nor is it likely that he who "blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances," would have instituted other carnal ordinances in their stead; or that he whose baptism was the anti-type of John's, should have directed the continuance of that decreasing typical dispensation.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

This rite was not regarded by George Fox as a permanent institution, but as pertaining to the Jewish passover, which Christ ate with his disciples.

He says in his Journal, "A great deal of work we had with the priests and professors about this, and about the several modes of receiving it in Christendom, so called; for some of them take it kneeling, some sitting; but none of them all, that ever I could find, take it as the disciples took it. For they took it in a chamber after supper; but these generally take it before dinner; and some say, after the priest hath blessed it, it is "Christ's body." But as to the matter, Christ said, 'Do this in remembrance of me.' He did not tell them how oft they should do it, or how long; neither did he enjoin them to do it always as long as they lived, or that all believers in him should do it to the world's end. The apostle Paul, who was not converted until after Christ's death, tells the Corinthians, that he had received of the Lord that which he delivered unto them concerning this matter, and relates Christ's words concerning the cup thus: 'This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me;' and himself adds, 'For [as often as] ye do eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.' So, according to what the apostle here delivers, neither Christ nor he did enjoin people to do this always, but leaves it to their liberty [as oft as ye drink it, &c]. The Jews did use to take a cup, and to break bread and divide it among them in their feasts, as may be seen in the Jewish Antiquities; so the breaking of bread and drinking of wine were Jewish rites, which were not to last always."*

To show that the supper which Christ ate with his disciples was not a new ceremony, nor an ordinance to be perpetuated in his church, the following considerations are offered:

First. It was the Jewish Passover which they partook of; for he said, "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples." Accordingly, the supper eaten among the primitive christians was in imitation of it. Moshiem informs us that, "both the Asiatic churches, and those of Rome, fasted during the great week (so that was called in which Christ died), and afterwards celebrated, like the Jews, a sacred feast; at which they dis-

* Journal, Vol. I., p. 285-6; and First London Edition, p. 230.

tributed a paschal lamb, in memory of the holy supper." The eastern and western churches differed about the time and manner of observing this ceremony; whence arose bitter disputes and much bloodshed after the church became corrupted. If the supper which Christ ate with his disciples, and which was imitated by the primitive churches, was intended to be observed as a permanent ordinance, who has a right to alter its form, or to omit some of its most interesting features, or to substitute for it another ceremony?

Secondly. "The apostle says, Acts x. 41, 'They did eat and drink with Christ after he rose from the dead.' And so they fulfilled Christ's words, that he would eat no more of the bread, nor drink of the fruit of the vine, until he drank it new with them in the kingdom of God. Mark xiv. 25. And again, Christ said, 'There are some standing here which shall not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom and power.' Matt. xvi. 28. And was not this fulfilled after Christ was risen, when he said, 'All power in heaven and earth is given unto me?' Then did he not come in power, and did not the disciples see him in his kingdom, after his resurrection?"*

Thirdly. If any part of the ceremony observed by Christ and his apostles on that occasion, was enjoined by him as a new institution, it was certainly the washing of feet; for he said, "If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." John, xiii. 14, 15. This part of the ceremony, expressive of humility and purity of life, is omitted by nearly all Christendom.

Fourthly. Christ said to his disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless—I will come to you," and "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This was, to them, the second appearance of Christ. And to every regenerated soul he still appears in spirit, and is that substance and life which fulfils all the shadows and ceremonies of the law, and sets free from them.

In a tract written by George Fox to show the distinction between the two suppers of Christ—namely, that of the Passover, which he ate with his disciples, and that which is mentioned in the third chapter of Revelations—he says: "After that Christ was ascended, and sat at the right hand of God, and the churches were gathered, as yet they were not come off from many outward elementary things. And did not Christ send John after he was ascended, to call the church to another supper, and said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with

* George Fox's Works, VI. 283.

him, and he with me; he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches"?

In conclusion, it may be observed in relation to these two rites of water baptism and the eucharist, that George Fox had the same reason for their disuse that Paul had, when he thanked God that he had baptized so few among the Corinthians.

They have given rise to sectarian distinctions; and, in all ages of the christian church, there has been much controversy in relation to the form of their observance. And, moreover, there has been too much stress laid upon them, as though they had, in themselves, some saving efficacy. To water-baptism has been attributed the regenerating effect which the spirit of Christ alone can produce; and the symbols of bread and wine are even now regarded, by a large part of Christendom, as being, when consecrated by the priest, the very body and blood of Christ.

It was, therefore, needful for the progress of truth, that these pernicious errors should be exploded; and there was perhaps no way so effectual as their entire disuse by a body of self-denying, practical christians. As king Hezekiah "brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made," because the children of Israel burnt incense to it," so did George Fox, from a persuasion of religious duty, abstain from the observance of ordinances not required under the gospel dispensation, and which had been the means of withdrawing the attention of many from the inward washing of regeneration, and from that bread of life which comes down from Heaven, and sustains the soul.

A DISSERTATION

ON THE

VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX

CONCERNING

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES.

CONTENTS.

On the Christian Ministry . . . Page 452
Divine Worship 456
Public Fasts, Thanksgivings, and Holy-days 459
Religious Liberty 460
War and Military Services 461
Capital Punishments, &c. 463
Oaths. 465
Slavery 466
Temperance 472
Dress and Address, Amusements, &c. . . 473
Music, Painting, &c. 475
Conclusion 476

A DISSERTATION ON THE VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX CONCERNING CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES.

It is interesting and instructive to trace, in the life and religious experience of George Fox, the germ, if not the full development of those noble testimonies borne by the Society of Friends, which are universally acknowledged to have had an important influence in alleviating the sufferings, and promoting the happiness of man. When we consider the growth of religious liberty in Europe, and its firm establishment in this country; when we hear of the many enlightened minds throughout Christendom, who are using their influence to advocate the principles of peace; when we learn the progress that has been made, within the last century, in mitigating the cruelties of slavery, and promoting its extinction; when we witness the blessed effects that flow from temperance, and are informed of the successful efforts employed to improve the condition and discipline of prisons; we cannot but believe that they who were the pioneers in these, and other kindred reformations, were instruments in the divine hand to promote his own beneficent purposes.

Christianity, considered as an inward and life-giving principle, is the root from which these, and all moral reformations, must spring. To him, therefore, the blessed Son of God, who "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," must be attributed all the glorious results which flow from the gift of God through him.

It was not long, however, before that light which shone so brightly in the morning of the gospel day, was obscured by the clouds of superstition, or shut out by the barriers of human invention. After a long night of apostacy, the light began to arise once more with the Protestant Reformation; but some of those who were first to hail with joy its dawning brightness, were more intent in speculating upon the causes which had obstructed its progress, than upon applying its discoveries to the promotion of practical righteousness. While Doctors of Divinity and Professors of Theology were earnestly engaged in a polemic warfare concerning abstruse points of doctrine, the mind of George Fox, remarkable for clearness of perception, and simple obedience to manifested duty, went more directly to the mark, and solved some of the most interesting problems of human existence.

The happiness of man and his progress in the spiritual life, depend less upon his opinions, and more upon his principles, than is generally believed. Opinions concerning controverted points of Theology,—once considered so essential to salvation,—have, when maintained without charity, led to endless debates and frequent strife; but the principles of righteousness implanted by the Most High and nourished by his grace, are of a practical nature, and bring forth those blessed fruits which redound to his praise.

The principles of Christianity may appropriately be divided into two classes; Doctrines and Testimonies. The most prominent and important of its doctrines having been examined in the preceding Dissertation, I now proceed to consider its Testimonies, as borne by George Fox, and subsequently advanced by his successors in the Society of Friends.

The word Testimony has acquired among Friends a meaning somewhat technical, but in strict accordance with its signification in several passages of the sacred volume. In this sense it means an open attestation or profession of some moral or religious principle, and is generally applied to those which have a practical bearing on the conduct of life.

ON THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

One of the earliest testimonies developed in the religious experience of George Fox, was against a ministry founded on human authority, relying for its qualifications on human abilities, or learning, and main-

tained by pecuniary support. This is undoubtedly one of the greatest evils in Christendom, and the source whence other evils of great magnitude have issued.

When it was first made known to him, while walking alone in the fields, that "to be bred at Oxford or Cambridge, was not enough to fit and qualify men to be ministers of Christ," he wondered at it, for such was the belief in which he had been educated. And as he advanced further in religious experience, being himself inwardly called, by the great Head of the Church, to testify unto others that "which his eyes had seen and his hands had handled of the word of life," he perceived more clearly that the gospel ministry is a divine gift, which can only be rightly exercised by continual dependence on the giver.

In a treatise, "concerning primitive ordination and succession," he shows conclusively, that, "to succeed the apostles in the same Holy Ghost, power and life, that they were in, is the only true succession; for it signifies nothing to have the writings or deeds for an estate, unless we come into the possession of it."

If, like the Israelites, the christian traveller is not permitted to eat of the manna which was gathered yesterday, but must rely upon God for daily bread to sustain the soul, is it not equally needful that ministers of the gospel, who are called to hand forth food to others, should administer only the bread which Christ hath blessed, and appointed for each particular occ ion? As the apostle "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake which is the church," so must the true ministers of the gospel be baptized at times, into a feeling of the state of the people. This inward and spiritual exercise was often allotted to George Fox, and to the other ministers who laboured with him. Sometimes, when assembled for Divine worship, they were required to wait long in silence, in order "to famish the people from words;" thus teaching them, by example, to seek within themselves for the power and life of the gospel.

The remarkable success of their ministry, cannot be attributed merely to the force of their arguments, or to the power of their elocution; but rather to that divine unction which attended them, adapting their discourses to the states of the people, and appealing to the witness for truth in the hearts of their auditors. Without this holy unction, the most learned and eloquent ministry is vain and unprofitable; with it, the most illiterate may become instrumental in leading the soul to God.

Nevertheless, the early Friends did not despise or neglect the advantage of mental culture. They acknowledged the evident intention of the Most High, that all His gifts should be improved, and that in the proper use and cultivation of our intellectual powers, while keeping them

subservient to his spiritual law, we advance our own happiness and become better qualified to promote the welfare of others.

It was not education to which they objected; for many among them were well instructed in literature and science, and they advised that all children should be instructed in useful learning, to prepare them for the duties of life. It was theological education as a preparation for the ministry, which received their decided condemnation.

Every sincere christian who reads his bible and attends to the ministrations of Divine grace in his own soul, is as capable of understanding the great truths of spiritual religion, as the most learned priest or theologian. Nay, he is more susceptible of religious progress; for nothing has tended more to mar the beautiful simplicity of christianity, than the false glosses and endless controversies of scholastic theology. It is alleged, that after the Protestant Reformation, Theology assumed a very different aspect, and has further improved since the days of George Fox; the studies now pursued being of a much more practical tendency. Admitting this to be true, it will be found on examination, that the root of the old tree, which has borne such bitter fruits, still remains. The ministry, in most of the churches in Christendom, is restricted to those who have gone through a theological training. Without this training, and a form of human ordination, the highest spiritual gifts are not considered a sufficient qualification for the office. The whole of the female sex, although acknowledged to be the purer part of the church, are excluded from the ministry; and yet it is evident that females were authorized to prophecy or preach in the primitive church.

Now let us reflect on the consequences that have ensued, and must always follow, from such unwarrantable attempts to restrain the operations of divine grace. If a woman of acknowledged piety believes herself called to the ministry in one of those churches, she is not even allowed to offer her gift, or to make proof of her calling. The language of Paul concerning the inquisitive women of Corinth, who probably disturbed the church with questions, and were advised to "ask their husbands at home," is generally applied to prohibit all service of females in public worship (except in singing); not considering, that in the same epistle the apostle directs the manner to be observed by women while praying or prophesying.* By this perversion of the text, women are denied that Christian liberty which the gospel confers, and the church is deprived of their valuable services. The prophecy of Joel, quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost, was evidently applied to the Christian church: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will

* 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35, and xi. 5.

pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy."*

In most of the churches of Christendom, if a man of religious experience and acknowledged piety should feel impelled, by a sense of duty, to express that which he believes has been given him for the benefit of others, he is not allowed to open his mouth in the congregation, unless he belong to the rank of the clergy. And, moreover, should he feel himself called to the Christian ministry, he must, before he can exercise his gift, spend years in the study of theology, pursuing a course marked out for him; not exploring the broad field of religious knowledge, but walking in a path hedged up on either side by the rank growth of sectarian dogmas.

The division of the church into two classes, clergy and laity, which finds no sanction in apostolic usage, has had a powerful influence in restraining the progress of Christian liberty. Like orders of nobility in a state, it is well calculated to perpetuate ancient usurpations, and to secure the reign of ecclesiastical domination. The titles assumed by the clergy, such as Reverend, Right Reverend, Holy Father, &c., have all sprung from that corrupt root in the human heart to which the gospel axe should be applied; and it was in allusion to such titles, that Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "Be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

Another branch of the same corrupt system is the receiving of money as a compensation for preaching. When Christ sent forth his disciples, without purse or scrip, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give;" he certainly did not mean that they should make merchandize of the gospel. It is indeed true that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and it is reasonable that they who hire should pay him. But ministers who go forth at Christ's command, having his free gospel to preach, receive full compensation from the head of the church, and are not dependent on man for their reward.

As in the outward and shadowy dispensation, they who ministered at the altar lived from the altar, partaking of the same outward substance which they offered, so, in strict analogy, the ministers of the gospel live by the gospel, being sustained in the inward life by a portion of the same spiritual food they hand forth to others. The apostles did not receive salaries for preaching, nor even gifts, as a compensation for their services, but they wrought with their own hands to supply their natural wants. They were indeed authorized to seek, in their travels, those who were worthy, and there to "abide, eating such things as were set before them;"† but this privilege belonged to every member

* Acts ii. 17.

† Matt. x. 11; Luke x. 8.

of the Christian church, for all were regarded as brethren and sisters. It appears, however, that in some places Paul was so scrupulous that he would not use even this "power to eat and to drink," or, in other words, to live at the houses of the brethren, and thus to "reap their carnal things." This reasonable privilege he illustrates by reference to the legal provision, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."

But he "used none of these things;" he was willing "to suffer all things, lest he should hinder the gospel of Christ," making it, "without charge," and not abusing his power in the gospel.* In his memorable address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, after warning them of the grievous wolves that should enter in among them, not sparing the flock, he refers to his own self-denying example, saying, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"†

What enormous evils have been brought upon the christian church by departing from this beautiful and consistent example! Witness the poverty and degradation of Italy, Spain, and Portugal,—studded with convents, and adorned with splendid cathedrals, but polluted with licentiousness, oppressed by priests, and overrun by beggars. Even in Protestant England, the hierarchy sits like an incubus on the breast of the state, and threatens her destruction. Happy was it for her, and for the cause of religious liberty throughout the world, that Divine Providence raised up those numerous sects of dissenters, who, in various degrees, have approached nearer than the established church to the doctrines and discipline of christianity, and thus have been the means of mitigating the evils that always flow from a union of church and state. Among these dissenting churches, none have been so consistent and effective in their opposition to ecclesiastical domination as the Society of Friends.

DIVINE WORSHIP.

The public worship of Almighty God is the most solemn service in which the human mind can be engaged, and has always been regarded by the Society of Friends as a testimony of primary importance. It is an open profession of our allegiance to the King of kings, an acknowledgment of our dependence upon his bounty and protection, and a necessary preparation for all other religious duties. It is only as we preserve our connection with the great Head of the Church, through

* 1 Cor. ix. 4, 9, 11, 18. † Acts xx. 33, 35.

the invisible and eternal bond of the Spirit, that we can grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

He has left for all his disciples the gracious promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

He is the true Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and according to the doctrine of George Fox, still maintained by the Society of Friends, Christ teaches his people himself, "through the influence of his light, spirit, and power." It cannot be supposed by an enlightened mind, that outward observances have in themselves any efficacy to secure Divine favour. God looks at the heart, and regards with favour every sigh that proceeds from a contrite spirit,—every aspiration that ascends from an humble, devoted soul.

Although in the infancy of our race, after man by transgression had lost the Divine image, outward sacrifices were offered as tokens or means of reconciliation, and were subsequently authorized by the Mosaic law; yet these "carnal ordinances," that "could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaineth to the conscience," were only imposed until the time of reformation, and were abrogated by the coming of Christ. His law is spiritual; and his kingdom being established in the hearts of his faithful followers, needs not those outward symbols which pertained to the ritual of the legal dispensation.

God dwells not in temples made with hands, neither is he worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything. The sacrifice which he requires is a contrite heart, and the smoke of the incense that ascends up before him is the prayers of the saints.

It is alleged in defence of ceremonial observances, that they are adapted to the weakness of our nature, and serve to fix the attention in time of public service. But there is reason to apprehend that, by fixing the attention on that which is outward, they withdraw it from inward and spiritual communion. Even the singing of hymns, or psalms, may have this tendency, especially when sung by persons to whose conditions they are not adapted. The best among christians are not always in a state of preparation to engage in vocal supplication, or to sing the praises of God; and for those who are profane or indifferent to spiritual things, to take an active part in this public service, is but a solemn mockery that must obstruct the great purpose of divine worship.

"The Christian dispensation," says Clarkson, "requires that all worship should be performed in spirit and in truth." It requires that no act of religion should take place, unless the spirit influences an utterance; and that no words should be used except they are in unison with the heart.

"Now this coincidence of spiritual impulse and feeling with this act, is not likely to happen with public psalmody. It is not likely that all in the

congregation will be impelled in the same moment to a spiritual song, or that all will be in the same mind or spirit which the words of the psalm describe. Thus how few will be able to sing truly, with David, if the following verse should be brought before them, 'as the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!'"

"To this may be added, that where men think about musical harmony, or vocal tunes in their worship, the amusement of the creature will be so mixed up with it, that it cannot be a pure oblation of the spirit: and that those who think they can please the Divine Being by musical instruments, or the varied modulations of their own voices, must look upon Him as a being with corporeal organs, sensible like a man of fleshly delights, and not as a spirit, who can only be pleased with the worship in spirit and in truth."

The influence of music on the passions is undoubtedly great — but transient. It may be made to excite or to soothe them; but it appears to have no power to effect their subjugation. Even the melody of David's harp could only allay for awhile the evil spirit of Saul; it had no power to subdue his inordinate affections, or to change his corrupt heart. The remarks made by Herschell, a converted Jew, on visiting his fatherland, seem appropriate to this subject. After showing the spiritual nature of Christian worship, he thus proceeds:

"I firmly believe, that if we seek to affect the mind by the aid of architecture, painting or music, the impression produced by these adjuncts is just so much substracted from the worship of the unseen Jehovah. If the outward eye is taken up with material splendour, or forms of external beauty, the mind's eye sees but little of 'Him who is invisible;' the ear that is entranced with the melody of sweet sounds, listens not to the 'still small voice' by which the Lord makes his presence known." *

The primitive Friends were mostly persons who had made a profession of religion in other churches. They had experienced the unsatisfying nature of ordinances and worship performed in the will of man; their hearts panted for a nearer communion with God, and this they found by introversion of mind, and silent worship. They were frequently instructed by George Fox to 'hold all their meetings in the power of God." With this purpose they sat down together in silence, endeavouring to withdraw their thoughts from all earthly objects, and to attain that stillness of the soul in which the impressions of Divine grace may be felt, and the voice of the true Shepherd distinguished from the voice of the stranger.

As we come under the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, our hearts are brought into communion with the Father and with the Son, and into fellowship one with another. It was said by the Divine Master, "whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother and sister, and mother." This holy relationship, which springs from the regenerating influence of Divine grace, is the most

* Friends' Review, I. 236.

endearing tie that can bind us to each other. When brought fully under its government, we shall feel bound to assemble ourselves together for the worship of our heavenly Father, not merely as a duty incumbent on us, but as the source of our highest and purest enjoyment. While we acknowledge that Divine worship may be acceptably performed at our own firesides, or while our hands are employed in our usual avocations, yet we know by blessed experience that strength is afforded by the presence and sympathy one of another, when we meet together in the right spirit, for the public worship of God. It is then the live coals that had been scattered are brought into mutual influence, increasing the glow and warmth of devotion; then the living stones are brought together of which the temple of the Lord is built, where his holy influence and presence are felt, and his pure worship known to our unspeakable joy.*

PUBLIC FASTS, THANKSGIVINGS, AND HOLY DAYS.

Although George Fox, on several occasions, fasted from a persuasion of religious duty, yet he clearly saw that those public or national fasts proclaimed by the civil or ecclesiastical authorities, being ordered in the will of man, without divine authority, are not conducive to vital religion, nor acceptable to God. Against such a fast, proclaimed by authority of Cromwell, he felt bound openly to testify; saying,

"This is not the fast that the Lord requires, 'To bow down the head like a bulrush for a day,' and the day following be in the same condition as they were the day before. To the light of Christ Jesus in your consciences do I speak, which testifieth for God every day, and witnesseth against all sin and persecution; which measure of God, if ye be guided by it, doth not limit God to a day, but leads to the fast the Lord requires, which is, 'to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free.' This is the fast the Lord requires, and this stands not in the transmission of times, nor in the traditions of men." †

Appointed days for public rejoicing and thanksgiving, are equally obnoxious to censure; being an unwarrantable interference with religious liberty, and generally attended with pernicious consequences, through the excessive indulgence of the appetites in eating and drinking. When we consider, moreover, that the days appointed for public thanksgiving, have in many instances been set apart to celebrate martial achievements, and victories in which thousands of our fellow-creatures were slain by the warrior's sword, we must acknowledge that such demonstrations are inconsistent with the religion of our holy Redeemer, whose kingdom is established in righteousness and peace.

---

* Epistle of Balt. Yearly Meeting, 1851.

† George Fox's Journal, II. 370.

On such occasions, there is great cause for mourning and humiliation, in witnessing the wide departure from Christian principles on the part of some who profess to be the disciples of Christ.

The Society of Friends, being persuaded that no religious act can be acceptable to God unless produced by the influence and assistance of his Holy Spirit, cannot consistently join with any in the observance of public fasts, feasts, or holy-days.

"Though exterior observances of a similar kind were once authorized under the law, as shadows of things to come, yet they who come to Christ will assuredly find that in him all shadows end." *

The Apostle Paul thus expostulates with some who had fallen from the true faith in these respects: "But now after that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage Ye observe days and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." †

"Let no man judge you, in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." ‡

"We," says Barclay, "not seeing any ground in scripture for it, cannot be so superstitious as to believe that either the Jewish Sabbath now continues, or that the first day of the week is the anti-type thereof, or the true Christian Sabbath; which, with Calvin, we believe to have a more spiritual sense: and therefore we know no moral obligation by the fourth commandment, or elsewhere, to keep the first day of the week, more than any other, or any holiness inherent in it." "But first, forasmuch as it is necessary that there be some time set apart for the saints to meet together to wait upon God; and that secondly, it is fit at sometimes they be freed from their other outward affairs; and that thirdly, reason and equity doth allow that servants and beasts have some time allowed them, to be eased from their continual labour; and that, fourthly, it appears that the Apostles and primitive Christians did use the first day of the week for these purposes; we find ourselves sufficiently moved for these causes to do so also, without superstitiously straining the scriptures for another reason: which that it is not there to be found, many Protestants, yea, Calvin himself, upon the fourth command hath abundantly evinced. And though we therefore meet, and abstain from working upon this day, yet doth not that hinder us from having meetings also for worship at other times." §

ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

The primitive Friends were the most consistent and efficient advocates of religious liberty. They granted to others, in its fullest extent, that which they claimed for themselves,—freedom to worship God according to their convictions of duty. The other dissenters in England, while claiming toleration for themselves, and for most of the Protestant sects, generally concurred with the Established Church in denying its extension to the Roman Catholics: but the Friends could

* Discipline of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, p. 26.

† Gal. iv. 9—11. ‡ Col. ii. 16, 17.

§ Barclay's Apology, Prop. XI., § IV.

make no such distinctions,—they held that the sovereignty of conscience belongs to God, and that no human power has a right to invade it. Other Protestant Churches, while suffering under persecution, had advocated the doctrine of religious toleration; but when they attained to power, they too generally forgot their liberal professions. The Friends, in their government of Pennsylvania, secured religious liberty to all, not placing it on the ground of humane toleration, but establishing it as an inherent right.

"It has, perhaps, been scarcely enough remarked," says a late writer in the Edinburgh Review, "that with the Quakers alone, of all Christian communities, religious freedom is matter of faith, not matter of opinion. Other churches have advocated toleration because they did not like being persecuted—through policy,—through confidence in a just cause,—through a mild and Christian spirit; or simply through lukewarmness; the Quakers alone with the unswerving earnestness of men who combat for their creed."

But, while asserting the freedom of conscience in all that relates to religious duty, they did not seek to screen from legal punishment, those who, under pretence of religion, violated the moral law; nor did they deny the right of the church to admonish its members for dereliction of duty, and to exclude from its communion, such impenitent offenders as could not be reclaimed.

ON WAR AND MILITARY SERVICES.

That war is inconsistent with the principles of Christianity, appears to have become a settled conviction in the mind of George Fox, at an early period in his religious experience. When he was twenty years of age, he was much grieved at hearing a proposition, that he should become a soldier in the auxiliary band; and two years later, while confined in the house of correction at Derby, he refused to accept a captaincy which was offered him in the Parliamentary army.

"I told them," he writes in his journal, "from whence all wars arose, even from the lusts, according to James' doctrine; and that I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars." In a declaration of the Society of Friends presented to the king in 1660, and preserved in the journal of George Fox, they say: "Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace and ensue it, to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all. We know that wars and fightings proceed from the lusts of men, out of which lusts the Lord hath redeemed us, and so out of the occasion of war."

"Our weapons are spiritual, not carnal, yet mighty through God, to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and Satan, who is the author of wars, fighting, murder and plots. Our swords are broken into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, as prophesied of in Micah, iv. Therefore we cannot learn war any more, neither rise up against nation or kingdom with outward weapons." *

* George Fox's Journal, I. 421–425.

The precepts of Christ in his sermon on the mount, requiring us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that hate us, have always been accepted by Friends in their plain and obvious meaning, as a prohibition, not only of revenge, but of all those principles and passions which lead to war. Christianity, as taught and exemplified by the Son of God, is emphatically a religion of love; it ascribes "Glory to God in the highest," and breathes "peace on earth and good will to men." God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. The effect of Divine Love when cherished and obeyed without reserve, is to cast out or subdue all that is opposed to its own nature; there can be no enmity or strife where it prevails, for he who loves God supremely, is led by the same principle, to love his neighbour as himself; and while under this holy influence, he is more willing to suffer injury, than to inflict it upon others.*

It is the christian's duty to suffer rather than contend, to "overcome evil with good," and to subdue hatred by love. The wisdom of God is manifest in this, that the greatest triumphs of christianity have been achieved through suffering: for nothing is so effectual, in subduing the fierce passions of men, as the meekness and patience of those who are fully imbued with the christian spirit. Love is the proper and only efficient antagonist of hatred. As well might we expect to extinguish fire by adding fuel, as to extinguish the spirit of war, by exhibiting or using the weapons of destruction.

It is a well-established historical fact, that christians during the first two centuries did not bear arms, but maintained the doctrine that war is forbidden under the gospel.

"Tertullian, in alluding to a large portion of the Roman armies, after Christianity had been widely spread over the world, expressly assures us, that 'not a Christian could be found among them.'"

"Irenæus, Justin Martyr, and others, furnish conclusive evidence that the Christians of their day bore the most ample testimony to the incompatibility of war with the religion of the gospel—and that many of them sealed their testimony with their blood. Clemens of Alexandria speaks of Christians as 'the followers of peace,' and says expressly, that they 'used none of the implements of war.' Lactantius, another early Christian, alleges, that 'it can never be lawful for a righteous man to go to war.'" "The evidence upon this point is fully sustained by the early opponents of Christianity. Celsus, who lived towards the close of the second century, accuses the Christians of his day, 'of refusing to bear arms, even in cases of necessity.' Origen, the defender of Christianity, does not deny, but admits the fact, and justifies it on the ground that war was unlawful." †

The ancient Waldenses, and the Bohemian Brethren,—forerunners of the Protestant Reformation,—maintained the same doctrine, and

* Baltimore Yearly Meeting Epistle, 1851.

† Friends' Review, I. 338; and Dymond on War, Clarkson, &c.

thousands of them laid down their lives in martyrdom, rather than resort to warlike weapons for their defence.

Let those who profess to be the ministers and disciples of Christ only embrace and inculcate this doctrine; then may we hope to see an end of those vast armaments by which Christendom is now oppressed, and the adoption of measures for the preservation of peace, more consistent with the precepts and example of our holy Redeemer.

If it be objected that a nation, by assuming a peaceable attitude, and forbearing to provide military defences, would invite aggression, and fall a prey to the rapacity of its neighbours, we need only point to the early history of Pennsylvania, where, for seventy years, peace, security, and unexampled happiness were enjoyed, by adhering to the peaceable principles of Christianity, although surrounded by savages inured to war. Those who profess the christian name, are too generally deficient in the christian spirit; and there is a great want of faith in the providence of God, who watches over us continually, and causes all things to work together for good, to them that love him.

Militia trainings, or musters, being a preparation for war, and an avowal of warlike intentions, are considered, by the religious Society of Friends, a violation of christian principles. The fines levied for non-attendance at musters, being also considered an equivalent for military service, and not as an ordinary tax levied upon all, they cannot voluntarily pay such levies; and therefore suffer the distraining of their goods as a result of their christian testimony against war.

ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS, THE REFORMATION OF CRIMINALS, AND TREATMENT OF THE INSANE.

George Fox, during his first imprisonment at Derby, having refused to accept the offer of a commission in the army, was thrust into that part of the jail allotted to felons; and here his mind became painfully exercised concerning the practice of putting men to death for larceny.

He wrote to the judges, showing that the death penalty for such offences, was contrary to the scriptures, and to the spirit of God, which leads to judgment and mercy. It is not certain that his mind was then brought to see the impropriety of capital punishments in all cases, but this was the germ of that religious concern for the reformation of criminals, and the substitution of confinement with labour, instead of the death penalty, which, originating with the Society of Friends, has spread and extended its influence, until it has been felt, in some degree, throughout christendom.

The criminal code of England was then extremely severe, and public executions, even for minor offences, were very frequent. The Friends

of Pennsylvania exempted from the penalty of death about two hundred offences, which were capitally punished under the laws of England.*

They reserved the death penalty for wilful murder only, which, perhaps, was as far as they could then advance; for all their laws were subject to revision by the British government. Subsequently, they saw further, and becoming fully convinced that society has no right to cut short the term of human life, they were among the first to advocate the abolition of capital punishments.

The argument for this measure may be briefly stated as follows:

The proper ends of punishment in all criminal cases are: First, to reform the offender: secondly, to deter others from crime: thirdly, to obtain restitution or compensation.† Society has no more right than individuals, to execute vengeance upon its offending members. "Avenge not yourselves," says the apostle of the Gentiles, "but rather give place unto wrath: 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay,' saith the Lord."

The death penalty can neither reform the criminal, nor procure restitution. Of the three ends proposed, it can, at best, effect but one, that is, to deter others from crime. How far it subserves this purpose, has of late years become a subject of serious examination, and many reflecting minds have arrived at the conclusion, that it tends to promote crime, rather than prevent it.

It was remarked by Elizabeth Fry, who had great opportunities of observation among prisoners, that "the frequent public destruction of life has a fearfully hardening effect upon those whom it is intended to intimidate.

"While it excites in them the spirit of revenge, it seldom fails to lower their estimate of the life of man, and renders them less afraid of taking it away in their turn, by acts of personal violence." . . . . "Capital convicts," she says, "pacify their conscience with the dangerous and most fallacious notion, that the violent death which awaits them, will serve as a full atonement for all their sins."‡

We may urge, as another objection to the death penalty, that it is irrevocable. If an innocent man suffers, society cannot restore him to life, and it is well known that, through the uncertainty of evidence, many such have been executed. A third objection is, that criminals often escape all punishment, through the repugnance of jurors to find a verdict in capital cases; whereas, if the penalty were imprisonment at labour, for a length of time proportioned to the offence, convictions would be more certain, and all the ends of punitive justice would be attained.

The penitentiary system, and other means adopted for the reformation

---

* J. R. Tyson's address on the 200th anniversary of the birth of Penn.

† See Dymond's Essay on Morality, III. chap. XIII.

‡ Observations on the Visiting, &c., of Female Prisoners, quoted by Dymond.

of criminals, have claimed a large share of attention from the Society of Friends, both in England and the United States, and their assiduous efforts have not been without encouraging results. Perhaps no philanthropic efforts have ever attracted more attention, or been attended with happier effects, than the visits of Elizabeth Fry to Newgate, and other prisons of Great Britain.

The treatment of the insane, for the improvement of their condition, having originated in the same philanthropic feelings, may be appropriately noticed here.

About the year 1794, an asylum for the insane, called the Retreat, was built by the Friends in England, and a system of mild treatment commenced, which was so humane and successful as to attract general attention.*

Prior to that time, the insane were everywhere governed by harsh and coercive treatment, which arose from erroneous views of the malady. It was then considered incurable, and even contagious; hence the more violent were terribly coerced, and the melancholic were left to their own insane ideas. The gentle measures pursued in Friends' Retreat, and the means adopted to promote the comfort and quietude of their patients, had the happiest tendency in allaying excitement, and restoring tranquillity to their perturbed minds. Other institutions followed their example, and from that period is dated a new era in the treatment of the insane.

OATHS.

At the time when the Society of Friends arose, there were frequent and radical changes in the British government, to secure which, oaths of allegiance and supremacy, often inconsistent with each other, were imposed upon the people. These oaths, and all others, George Fox felt bound to decline, being persuaded that swearing, in all cases, and in every form, is inconsistent with the precepts of Christ, and the spirit of the gospel.

Convinced of the demoralizing tendency of this practice, he wrote to the court at Derby, during his imprisonment there, in the year 1650, admonishing them to "take heed of imposing false oaths upon the people, or making them take oaths which they could not perform."

He subsequently gave forth a paper at the Lancaster assizes, showing that swearing is positively forbidden by "our Lord and Master, who says, 'Swear not at all; but let your communication be yea, yea, and nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.'" This is also corroborated by that injunction of the apostle James, "My breth-

* London "Friend," 6th month, 1852.

ren, above all things swear not, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath, lest ye fall into condemnation." These precepts of Christ and his apostle, were understood literally, and without limitation, by the primitive Christians, and being so accepted by the Society of Friends, they felt bound to bear an uncompromising testimony against oaths of every kind. This testimony subjected them to great sufferings and long imprisonments, but their faith enabled them to wear out the rod of persecution by patiently enduring its infliction, until the laws were modified and relief afforded.

The argument against oaths may be briefly stated as follows:

1. They have a demoralizing tendency. By making too great a distinction between a falsehood when under oath, and a departure from veracity at other times, the abhorrence which ought to be felt for lying is diminished in public opinion.

2. They are unnecessary. For if the same penalties, and the same abhorrence which are now attached to perjury, were attached to falsehood in judicial cases, a solemn affirmation would answer all the purposes of swearing.

3. They lead to irreverence. For it is presumptuous to summon the Most High as a witness on trivial occasions, and a proper sense of his omnipresence should deter us from invoking his holy name on any occasion, except in acts of devotion.

4. But if no other objection existed, the prohibition of our Saviour is sufficient.

Under the Mosaic law, swearing, like divorce, and some other evils, was permitted, "because of the hardness of their hearts;" but Jesus Christ refers to that law, and adds, "I say unto you, swear not at all," &c.

SLAVERY.

The prominent part taken by the religious Society of Friends, in opposing the practice and principle of slavery, will justify a particular notice of the rise and progress of this testimony.

Fifty years before the colonization of the British provinces in North America, a traffic in negro slaves had been established by the Europeans. Spain and Portugal took the lead in this nefarious business, but the English were soon after engaged in it; and Queen Elizabeth herself condescended to share, with her Admiral, Sir John Hawkins, the profits of supplying the Spanish colonies with the unhappy victims of his marauding expeditions on the African coast.

The first importation of slaves into the British North American colonies, was by the Dutch, who, in the year 1620, entered the James river, in Virginia, and landed twenty Africans for sale.*

* Bancroft's U. S., I. 176.

At the time when the Society of Friends arose, the number of slaves in some of the British provinces was already considerable. Between the years 1655 and 1658, a number of Friends, on religious missions, visited Barbadoes, New England, New York, Virginia, and Maryland; in all of which colonies some of the inhabitants were convinced of their principles.

It was not, however, until after the settlement of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, toward the close of the seventeenth century, that Friends became numerous in any of the provinces. Some of their proselytes were probably owners of slaves, and others of their members, who had recently emigrated from Europe, were induced, by the habits of thought then prevailing, and the supposed convenience of slave labour, to purchase and hold the African captives brought to their shores. It is remarked by Clarkson, in his "Portraiture of Quakerism," that "George Fox was probably the first person who publicly declared against this species of slavery; for nothing that could be deplored by humanity seems to have escaped his eye." The earliest advice issued on this subject, appears to have been the counsel he gave, in 1671, to Friends in Barbadoes:

"Respecting their negroes, I desired them," he says in his journal, "to endeavour to train them up in the fear of God, as well those that were bought with their money as them that were born in their families, that all might come to the knowledge of the Lord; that so, with Joshua, every member of a family might say, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' I desired also that they would cause their overseers to deal mildly and gently with their negroes, and not use cruelty towards them, as the manner of some hath been and is, and that after certain years of servitude, they should make them free." *

In a public discourse spoken in that Island, he bears the following remarkable testimony:

"Let me tell you, it will doubtless be very acceptable to the Lord, if so be that masters of families here would deal so with their servants, the negroes and blacks, whom they have bought with their money, [as] to let them go free after they have served faithfully a considerable term of years, be it thirty years after, more or less, and when they go and are made free, let them not go away empty-handed."

About four years later, William Edmundson addressed an epistle to Friends of Maryland, Virginia, and other parts of America, which contains the following passage:

"And must not negroes feel and partake the liberty of the gospel, that they may be won to the gospel? Is there no year of jubilee for them? Did not God make us all of one mould? And did not Jesus Christ shed his blood for us all?" . . . . "And Christ's command is to do to others as

* George Fox's Journal, II. 134.

we would have them to do to us; and which of you all would have the blacks or others to make you their slaves without hope or expectation of freedom or liberty? Would not this be an aggravation upon your minds that would outbalance all other comforts? So make their conditions your own; for a good conscience void of offence, is of more worth than all the world, and Truth must regulate all wrongs and wrong dealing." *

At a Yearly Meeting of Friends of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, held in 1688, a paper was presented by some German Friends from Kreisheim, settled near Germantown, "concerning the lawfulness and unlawfulness of buying and keeping negroes." No action was taken upon it at that time, but in 1696, the Yearly Meeting advised its members "not to encourage the bringing in any more negroes; and that such that have negroes, be careful of them, bring them to meetings with them in their families, and restrain them from loose and lewd living as much as in them lies, and from rambling abroad on First-days and other days."

William Penn mourned over the state of the slaves, but his efforts to meliorate their condition by legal enactments were defeated in the House of Assembly.†

He made provision for the liberation of the few slaves in his possession, and he brought the subject before the Monthly Meeting of Friends in Philadelphia, in the year 1700, when a minute was made, directing that the negroes and Indians should be encouraged to attend Friends' Meetings, and that meetings should be appointed for the colored people once a month.

In 1715, Friends of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, in their Yearly Meeting, came to the conclusion, to disown any of their members who should be concerned in the importation of slaves, and advices were issued that "All Friends who have or keep negroes, do use and treat them with humanity, and a christian spirit: and that all do forbear judging or reflecting on one another, either in public or private, concerning the detaining or keeping them servants." ‡

In 1729, the subject of slave-holding was again revived in the Yearly Meeting by a minute from Chester Monthly Meeting, and further advices issued.

From this time forward, it claimed the frequent and earnest attention of Friends, until 1754, when John Woolman published his "Considerations on the keeping of Negroes," which greatly accelerated the progress of this important testimony.

The writings of Woolman on this subject, are among the best that have ever been produced. They abound with pertinent facts, and

* "Brief statement of the Rise and Progress of the testimony of Friends against Slavery."

† Janney's Life of Penn, chap. XXXI. ‡ Brief Statement, &c. p. 12.

cogent arguments, enforced with earnestness, but tempered with that spirit of meekness and love which is most effectual in disarming opposition and promoting conviction. His conduct and public ministry were characterised by a like spirit of mildness and benignity, which rendered his labours effectual, when he went forth on his holy mission, to plead the cause of the oppressed, and to be as a mouth for the dumb.

Anthony Benezet was another efficient advocate of emancipation, to whose pen is attributed an excellent Epistle to Friends, issued by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1754. The following extract will show the spirit which actuated those early labourers in the cause of humanity.

"Now, dear Friends, if we continually bear in mind the royal law of 'doing to others as we would be done by,' we shall never think of bereaving our fellow-creatures of that valuable blessing, liberty, nor endure to grow rich by their bondage. To live in ease and plenty by the toil of those, whom violence and cruelty have put in our power, is neither consistent with Christianity nor common justice; and we have good reason to believe draws down the displeasure of heaven; it being a melancholy but true reflection, that where slave-keeping prevails, pure religion and sobriety decline; as it evidently tends to harden the heart, and render the soul less susceptible of that holy spirit of love, meekness and charity, which is the peculiar character of a true Christian." . . . .

In the year 1758, John Woolman, John Scarborough, John Sykes and Daniel Stanton, were authorized by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, to visit those of its members who held slaves, and from this date, during a period of eighteen years, the records show that almost every year the subject claimed the earnest and increasing attention of the meeting. Committees were appointed by the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings, to enforce the advices of the Yearly Meeting, and so effectual were these persevering and affectionate efforts, that most of the members who held slaves had set them at liberty prior to the year 1776, when a clause was inserted in the discipline, making the holding or hiring of slaves a sufficient cause for expulsion.

The proceedings of the other Yearly Meetings on this continent were conducted in the same spirit, and attended with similar results. The Yearly Meeting of New England, held at Rhode Island in 1717, took up the subject of importing and keeping slaves, and, after a series of efforts through a long course of years, made slave-holding a disownable offence in the year 1770. The Yearly Meeting of New York came to the same conclusion in 1777, and the Yearly Meeting of Maryland in 1778.

The first step taken by the Virginia Yearly Meeting, was in 1757, which was an effort to deter its members from importing or dealing in slaves, and to secure the kind treatment and christian instruction of

those in their possession. In 1768, it prohibited the purchase of any more slaves by its members; and in 1773 it issued the following advice to its subordinate meetings:

"It is our clear sense and judgment that we are loudly called upon in this time of calamity and close trial, to minister justice and judgment to black and white, rich and poor, and free our hands from every species of oppression, lest the language made use of by the Almighty through his prophet, should be extended to us; 'The people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully, therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them; their own way have I recompensed upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.' We do, therefore, most earnestly recommend to all who continue to withhold from any, their just right to freedom, as they prize their own present peace and future happiness to clear their hands of this iniquity, by executing manumissions for all those held by them in slavery, who are arrived at full age, and also for those who may yet be in their minority, to take place when the females attain the age of eighteen, and the males twenty-one years. And we believe the time is come when every member of our religious society, who continues to support or countenance this crying evil, either by continuing their fellow-creatures in bondage, or hiring such who may be kept in that state, should be admonished and advised to discontinue such practices."

The unremitting efforts of the Virginia Friends were continued until the year 1784, when a rule of discipline was adopted which directed Monthly Meetings to extend such further care and labour as they apprehended would be useful; and where these endeavours proved ineffectual, to disown the offenders.

Thus we see, that from the first introduction of this important question into a Yearly Meeting of Friends, in 1688, until its settlement in 1784, was nearly a century; during the greater part of which it had claimed the earnest and unremitting attention of many faithful servants of the Most High, whose zealous endeavours being directed by heavenly wisdom, and tempered by christian charity, were at last successful. They held that the great object of christian discipline, is to restore offenders, rather than cut them off from church membership; which should be done only as a last resort, when the prospect of reformation is gone.

The practice of slave-holding had gained an entrance among them in an unguarded hour, and before its enormity was fully disclosed; for it was then sanctioned by public opinion, and even advocated as a means of civilizing the Africans. But its root was found in the selfish nature of the unregenerate heart; the intention, however disguised by plausible excuses, was not to benefit the African, but to promote the ease, convenience, and profit, of the dominant class. Men possessed of good intentions, humane feelings, and even of religious principles, were drawn into it for want of due reflection; but these, when it became a

subject of religious concern among their brethren, were readily induced to relinquish it. There was, however, another class of members who held on to their slaves with greater tenacity; men, who looked at the subject chiefly as it affected their own interests, and cherished the unreasonable opinion that the happiness and mental improvement of the African race may, without injustice, be sacrificed to promote the wealth or convenience of the European.

It was to convince these less scrupulous members, that the unremitting efforts of Friends were directed for several generations; and so successful were their labours, that very few were required to be disowned when the rule against slave-holding was finally adopted.

It is worthy of note, that many who emancipated their slaves were not satisfied to send them forth empty-handed from the house of bondage, but made them such reparation as justice required. In some meetings, committees were appointed to ascertain the amount that was equitably due from the master to the slave.

The attention of Friends has also been directed to improving the condition of the free people of colour, as may be seen by the following rule of discipline, which is still in force, and has been generally observed:

"In relation to the descendants of the African race, we earnestly desire that those under the care of any of our members, may be treated with kindness, and instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their respective neighbourhoods, advise and assist those who are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns."*

It was not until after the society had cleared itself of the sin and reproach of slave-holding, that it began to extend its labours to others. It has now borne this testimony, even in slave-holding states, openly and unflinchingly, for about seventy years; having issued numerous publications on the subject, addressed many memorials to legislative bodies, and frequently sent committees to wait upon men in authority, in order to plead the cause of the oppressed.

One of the latest advices issued on the subject, is here subjoined; being an extract from the minutes of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, in 1851.

"The condition of our brethren of the African race, has been brought before our view as a subject of deep and painful interest. While we deplore the wrongs to which they are subjected, we feel the necessity of watchfulness and prayer, that we may be enabled to bear our righteous testimony in the meek and peaceable spirit of the Lamb.

"Our position is one of peculiar difficulty and high importance, for if we

* Discipline of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, p. 62.

imbibe the feelings and views which generally pervade communities where slaves are held, we may gradually lose our sense of the injustise and deplorable consequences of slavery; but if on the other hand, we allow the wrongs inflicted upon them to produce in our minds an undue excitement, we may become unfitted to bear our testimony in that spirit of meekness, which alone can render it effectual.

"The condition of the free people of colour has also claimed our sympathy. Subjected to many of the degrading influences which slavery exerts upon their race, mostly debarred from the privileges of education, and supplied with few incitements to industry; we can scarcely expect from them a higher intellectual and moral standing than they have attained.

"May we, therefore, exert our influence and manifest our sympathy, by acts of kindness, calculated to encourage them in the education of their children, and the improvement of their moral condition."

TEMPERANCE.

Although the early Friends were remarkably temperate in the use of distilled and fermented liquors, yet it does not appear that they saw the propriety of abstaining from them as a beverage. George Fox preached temperance, and warned those who kept houses of entertainment, not to supply their guests with more liquor than would do them good. About the year 1780, the subject of intemperance, together with "the unnecessary use of spirituous liquors, and their distillation," claimed the attention of Friends, in their meetings for discipline.* Between this date, and the year 1808, the following advices were issued by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.†

"Many religiously attentive minds having been long painfully burdened with observing the corrupting, debasing, and ruinous effects consequent on the importation and retailing large quantities of distilled spirits, whereby the intemperate use of them is greatly aided and encouraged, to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more, and increasing vice and dissoluteness in the land, it is the united sense of this meeting, that well concerned Friends in all quarters, be earnestly excited to suffer the affecting importance of this mighty evil, religiously to impress their minds, and animate them with lively concern, to exert honest endeavours by example and loving entreaty, to caution and dissuade all our members from being concerned in the importation or retailing distilled spirits, and from using them in time of harvest or otherwise. And where it is apprehended there may be occasion of using any as medicine, it is earnestly desired that religious caution be observed therein." It is added in relation to "our Christian testimony against the tradings in and use of distilled spirituous liquors," that "Quarterly and monthly meetings are afresh urged to renew patient, persevering labour, with such as are in this practice, manifesting, that, if continued in by any of our members, it cannot admit of any countenance while there is a faithful adherence to the divine principles of good will to men. And let endeavours be used to dissuade the members of our religious society from being either owners of distilleries, or procuring their fruit to be converted into spirits."

---

* Memoirs of James Thornton, Comly's Miscellany, I. 56.

† Book of Advices, Phila., 1808, p. 60–1.

This testimony has now been maintained by the Society for about half a century; the use of all intoxicating drinks is discouraged, and the distillation, sale, or common use, as a beverage, of ardent spirits, is deemed a sufficient cause for expulsion.

DRESS AND ADDRESS, GAMES OF CHANCE, AND OTHER AMUSEMENTS.

The first two subjects embraced under this head have, by some writers, been designated as "peculiarities or sectarian distinctions." * They are believed, however, to rest on the same basis as the great and leading testimonies already examined, having sprung from a willingness on the part of the early Friends, to follow their convictions of duty, even in the smallest particulars. Nothing can be considered small or unimportant that is clearly manifested to the mind as a divine requisition; whereas all things are comparatively trivial, that have not some relation to the welfare of the soul.

The first members of the Society of Friends were generally gathered from the plain and serious portion of the English people, who wore a dress more simple and less expensive than was usual in fashionable life. This dress was retained after they became members, and those from the gayer circles who joined them through convincement, found it their duty to dispense with gaudy apparel and superfluous ornaments, which they deemed inconsistent with Christian gravity. The children of Friends being educated as members, were taught to consider decency and comfort the main points to be observed in the choice of their clothing; hence, they were discouraged from the use of gay or sumptuous apparel, and from following the changeable fashions of the world, which too often occupy the attention of the young, and withdraw their minds from the proper business of life—the service of God. Thus the Society of Friends, by retaining, in some measure, the simple costume of its early members, and without prescribing in its discipline any particular colour or form of apparel, has become distinguished by a mode or style of dress peculiar to itself.

The following advice, from its book of discipline, is wise and salutary:

"Let decency, simplicity and utility be our principal motives, and not to conform to the vain and changeable fashions of the world; though we may occasionally adopt alterations which appear convenient or useful. This is a principle the propriety of which we apprehend no serious Christian will deny, and whilst in ages of pride and extravagance of dress, the adoption of this rule may make us appear singular, yet in relation to us, this singularity is not without its use. It is in some respects like a hedge about us, which though it does not make the ground it encloses, rich and fruitful, yet it

* Marsh's Life of George Fox.

frequently prevents those intrusions by which the labour of the husbandman is injured or destroyed."

This consideration is no less applicable to the use of the singular pronoun *thou* or *thee*, in addressing a single person. An adherence, in this respect, to the language of scripture, and the simplicity of ancient times, not only serves as a hedge to protect the young from too great an intercourse with the gay world, but it is more perspicuous, as well as more consistent with the principles of grammar. A departure from this ancient form of speech was first induced by a desire to compliment the great. "It was," says William Penn, "first ascribed in way of flattery to proud popes and emperors; imitating the heathens' vain homage to their gods; thereby ascribing a plural honour to a single person; as if one pope had been made up of many gods, or one emperor of many men."*

George Fox believed it his religious duty to promote the restoration of a pure language, and of a deportment founded in sincerity and truth. He therefore abstained from the use of the plural pronoun to a single person, and from all flattering titles, as well as from bowing the body, bending the knee, or uncovering the head, as tokens of respect or reverence to man. As these customs had originated in vanity and pride, he believed they were calculated to nourish the same pernicious passions; for even the teachers and professors of religion expected to receive honour one of another, and sought not the honour that cometh from God only.

The correctness of this position was fully evinced by the abuse and persecution inflicted on him and his friends for their plain and unflattering address, even when accompanied by the most courteous and obliging demeanour. For refusing to take off their hats in the presence of magistrates and judges, they were often severely reprimanded, and even imprisoned.

This refusal, they maintained, was not for want of respect towards the legal tribunals, but because the uncovering of the head was a token of reverence they could offer to none but the Deity. While engaged in preaching the gospel, or in vocal prayer, they uncovered their heads; but this they considered an act of homage that could not, with propriety, be paid to a mortal like themselves.

Being called, as they believed, to come out from the world, by forsaking its vain fashions and frivolous amusements, they abstained from frequenting, or in any way encouraging, theatres, balls, horse-races, games of chance, festivals, or musical entertainments. These amusements are so manifestly inconsistent with the gospel of Christ, which

* No cross no crown, Book I., Chap. IX.

requires us to walk "circumspectly, redeeming the time," and to do all things for the glory of God; that an argument to show their impropriety appears to be needless.

MUSIC, PAINTING, &c.

When we consider that Music, Painting and Sculpture, have usually flourished most in those countries where luxury and voluptuousness have most prevailed; it is not surprising that a people like the primitive Friends, who viewed all employments as useless or pernicious, which did not contribute to vital religion, should have looked with distrust or aversion on those favourite studies of the fashionable world.

They considered the great business of life to be the service of God, by seeking the knowledge of his law, enjoying the communion of his spirit, and performing these deeds of charity, and love, which he requires. These are the means of promoting the soul's highest enjoyment, and when thus employed in the divine service, it has little relish for those sensual and transitory pleasures, which are dependent on the skill of the artist.

The objections that may be urged against music as an adjunct of divine worship, have already been stated: its cultivation as an art, for the promotion of social enjoyment, comes now to be considered.

"Friends believe music a sensual gratification, and that it takes the place in the affections of intellectual enjoyments, They believe it to be the handmaid of folly and voluptuousness, and that it leads into fashion, balls, theatres, and other places of vain amusements. Whatever may be its power in soothing the angry passions, it is ephemeral in its nature, and incapable of commanding a divine thought, or raising the soul to sublime or spiritual enjoyments. It drowns th still small voice of conscience, and prevents that introversion of thought which constitutes the Christian's highest enjoyment."

"They do not, however, mean to be understood as objecting to melodious sounds, raised in thankfulness to the Author of our being, [and proceeding from the influence of Divine Love], or to the innocent song of childhood. It is the scientific cultivation of the art — the vain and idle indulgence connected with it, either vocally or instrumentally, that they testify against." *

"Music," says Clarkson, "has been so generally cultivated, and to such perfection, that it now ceases to delight the ear unless it comes from the fingers of the proficient. But great proficiency cannot be attained in this science without great sacrifice of time."

"If the education of young females is thought most perfect, when their musical attainments are the highest, not only hours, but even years, must be devoted to the pursuit.

"Such a devotion to this one object, must, it is obvious, leave less time than is proper for others that are more important. The knowledge of domestic occupations, and the various sorts of knowledge acquired by reading, must be abridged in proportion as the science is cultivated to profes-

* Essay on the subject of Music, issued by Meeting for Sufferings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1852.

sional precision. And hence it must be acknowledged by the sober world to be chargeable with a criminal waste of time." .... "Now all this long application is of a sedentary nature." .... "In proportion as the body is weakened by the sedentary nature of the employment, it is weakened again by the enervating powers of the art. Thus the nervous system is acted upon by two enemies at once." .....

"Hence the females of the present age, amongst whom this art has been cultivated to excess, are generally found to have a weak and languid constitution, and to be disqualified more than others, from their domestic and social duties." .... "And this waste of time is the more to be deprecated, because it frequently happens that when young females marry, music is thrown aside after all the years that have been spent in its acquisition, as an employment either then unnecessary, or as an employment which, amidst the cares of a family, they have not leisure to follow." *

Many of the objections urged against music will not, so fully, apply to drawing and painting; both of which, but more especially the former, may be made subservient to useful purposes. "At the same time it must be admitted that christianity, can never sanction the appropriation of that large amount of time, and superior talent, which is often wasted on works of mere fancy and of no practical utility;—much less, when that time and talent are expended on subjects that are calculated to shock, or what is worse, to blunt those feelings of delicacy, and propiety, which may, in a subordinate sense, be termed the safeguards of virtue." †

CONCLUSION.

It will be seen on examination of the testimonies borne by the primitive Friends, that they waged a determined warfare against every form of oppression, vice and folly. They made no compromise with the world. They appear not to have taken into account the opprobrium they would incur, or the sufferings to which they must be subjected. Neither the rewards of wealth and honour, nor the penalties of pain, imprisonment and death, could induce them to swerve from the narrow path marked out for them by the secret monitor within the breast. Cromwell acknowledged their incorruptible integnity in these remarkable words, "Now I see there is a people risen that I cannot win either with gifts, honours, offices, or places; but all other sects and people I can."

Is it surprising that the world rose up in arms against them? The English hierarchy and the Dissenting clergy, though opposed to each other, could combine to attack these daring advocates of a free and unsalaried christian ministry. The rulers of the nation and the heads of universities, were alarmed at the broaching of those doctrines of liberty and equality, which struck at the root of aristocratic power. The magistrates and judges lent their aid to repress the rising sect, and the

* Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism, I. 30. † Friends' Review, I. 279.

rude populace, incited by the example of their superiors, inflicted upon their unresisting victims, every form of opprobrium and abuse. In the year 1662, being two years after the accession of Charles II., there were in the prisons of England, 4200 of those called Quakers, who had been committed for frequenting meetings, for refusing to swear, and for other branches of their christian testimonies. Some of the prisons were so crowded with them, that there was not sufficient room for all to sit down at once. Many were confined in damp and filthy cells, where they sickened and died, for want of pure air.

They were cruelly beaten; neither age nor sex being regarded, but the most delicate women, and men far advanced in years, were treated with rude severity.

On the accession of James II., fourteen hundred of them remained in prison, a number of whom had been thus separated from their families during twelve or fourteen years, and some hundreds had died in prison.

In the city of London alone, five hundred were at one time imprisoned, and many of them being in Newgate and Bridewell, were thrust in among the felons.

In Thomas Ellwood's autobiography, after describing their condition in Newgate, he thus relates the removal of himself and others to Bridewell:

"The porter of Bridewell came to us and told us we knew the way to Bridewell without him, and he could trust us; therefore, he would not stay nor go with us, but left us to take our own time, so we were in before bedtime. . . . . Having made up our packs and taken our leave of our friends, whom we were to leave behind, we took our bundles on our shoulders, and walked two and two abreast, through the Old Bailey and Fleet street, and so to old Bridewell. And it being about the middle of the afternoon, and the streets pretty full of people, both the shop-keepers at their doors and passengers in the way, would stop us, and ask us what we were and whither we were going; and when we had told them we were prisoners going from one prison to another, 'What!' said they, 'without a keeper?' 'No,' said we, 'for our word, which we have given, is our keeper.' Some, thereupon, would advise us not to go to prison, but to go home. But we told them we could not do so; we could suffer for our testimony, but could not fly from it."

Those who were not imprisoned, suffered great hardships, for the trained bands, armed with muskets, pikes, and halberds, came frequently to break up their meetings, and rushing in furiously among them, wounded and bruised many. When the meeting-houses were locked up by the public authorities, the Friends met near them in the street, where, being engaged in preaching and praying, they attracted a crowded auditory, and made many proselytes. When their meeting-houses were torn down, they met near the ruins; when dirt and rubbish were thrown upon them, they refused to disperse, standing close to-

gether and willing to be buried "witnessing for the Lord." Even the children among them assembled and kept up their meetings when their parents were taken to prison.

Such passive fortitude has seldom been witnessed in any age or country. But they were not less bold and fearless in asserting their doctrines, than patient in suffering for them. They abhorred persecution, but they loved all men, and prayed sincerely, even for those who caused them to suffer.

From the rise of the Society to the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, being a period of about forty years, they were, with some short intermissions, exposed to almost continual persecution both in Great Britain and in several of her American colonies. But although they patiently suffered imprisonment and the spoiling of their goods, they did not fail to take such methods for relief as were consistent with the spirit of the gospel; they appealed constantly to the public through the press, and to their rulers by respectful petitions.

"Baxter, though not favourably disposed towards Friends, bears testimony to their constancy under the cruel operation of the Conventicle Act, observing, 'Here the Quakers did greatly relieve the sober people for a time; for they were so resolute, and so gloried in their constancy and sufferings, that they assembled openly at the Bull and Mouth, near Aldersgate, and were dragged away daily to the common jail, and yet desisted not, but the rest came next day. Abundance of them died in prison, and yet they continued their assemblies still.'"

On this passage, Orme, the biographer of Baxter, makes this remark: "Had there been more of the same determined spirit among others which the Friends displayed, the sufferings of all parties would sooner have come to an end. The government must have given way, as the spirit of the country would have been effectually roused. The conduct of the Quakers was infinitely to their honor." In another note relative to Friends, the same writer remarks: "The heroic and persevering conduct of the Quakers, in withstanding the interference of government with the rights of conscience, by which they finally secured those peculiar privileges they so richly deserve to enjoy, entitles them to the veneration of all the friends of civil and religious freedom."*

The benefit that has accrued to mankind from the support and extension of these christian testimonies, can admit of neither doubt nor dispute: and the inquiry may arise in some minds, how shall we account for the fact that the primitive Friends were enlighted on these subjects so far beyond the age in which they lived?

They were a deep, spiritually-minded people, who sought the truth without prejudice; relying, not upon human authority or tradition, but reading diligently the sacred scriptures, and trusting in the revelations of Divine grace in the soul, as the Holy Oracles of God.

* Quoted in Evans's Exposition—Brief Account, &c., p. 39.

A DISSERTATION

ON THE

VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX

CONCERNING

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE.

CONTENTS.

Discipline of the Primitive Church	Page 479	Burials	493
History of Friends' Discipline	481	Charity and Care of the Poor	494
Meetings for Discipline	486	Trade and Business	494
Meetings for Worship	488	Education	495
Ministers and Elders	489	Settlement of Differences	496
Membership	491	Treatment of Offenders	496
Marriage	492	Conclusion	497

A DISSERTATION ON THE VIEWS OF GEORGE FOX CONCERNING CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE.

The views of George Fox on christian discipline, like all his religious tenets, were in strict accordance with the fundamental doctrine of Christianity — the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit — through which the great Head of the church preserves his connection with it, and teaches his people himself.

The church of Christ in its purity is a united body, composed of many living members, each having an appropriate place and service, according to the measure of grace received, and all growing in proportion to their obedience to "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." This is beautifully illustrated by the apostle Paul, in the 12th chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, wherein he shows that "there should be no schism in the body; but, that the members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." . . . . . "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, differences of administration, but the same Lord, diversities of

operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

While this vital principle continued in full force, in the primitive church, those who were called to the exercise of spiritual gifts in teaching or government, did not affect to be "lords over God's heritage, but were as ensamples to the flock."

There was not among them a class of priests whose business it was exclusively to provide for the religious wants of the community, and to form a link between them and God. They had "one heavenly King, guide, and teacher, through whom all were taught from God: one faith, one hope, one spirit, which must animate all."*

The church government which resulted from this heavenly union was not formed and administered by one man, or even by a few, but shared by the whole body: it was not coercive but persuasive, not conducted in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

"In those early times," says Mosheim, "every Christian church consisted of the people, their leaders, and the ministers and deacons; and these indeed belong essentially to every religious society. The people were undoubtedly first in authority, for the Apostles showed by their authority, that nothing of moment was to be carried on or determined without the consent of the assembly. Acts i. 15; vi. 3; xv. 4; xxi. 22. It was therefore the assembly of the people, which chose rulers and teachers, or received them by a free and authoritative consent, when recommended by others. The same people rejected or confirmed by their suffrages the laws that were proposed by their rulers to the assembly, excommunicated profligate and unworthy members of the church, restored the penitent to their forfeited privileges; passed judgment upon the different subjects of controversy or dissension that arose in their community, examined and decided the disputes which happened between the elders and deacons, and in a word, exercised all that authority which belongs to such as are invested with sovereign power.

"There reigned among the members of the Christian church, however distinguished they were by worldly rank and titles, not only an amiable harmony, but a perfect equality." †

The distinction of clergy and laity was then unknown. Spiritual gifts conferred by the Head of the church, and acknowledged by the body of believers, constituted the ground and authority of the christian ministry. "If any man speak," says Peter, "let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth."

But although individuals were especially called to particular services, as, for instance, preaching the gospel, governing the church, or providing for the poor, yet this excluded none from the public expression of their exercises; for says the apostle Paul, "All may prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." This beautiful

* Neander's History of the Church, Sec. II. A, p. 102.

† Ecclesiastical History, First Century.

and salutary order, combined with christian charity, being lost in the apostacy through the usurpations of the clergy, was restored in the system of discipline recommended by George Fox, and still preserved, in its essential features, in the Society of Friends.

HISTORY OF ITS INSTITUTION.

The history of the institution of discipline in the Society of Friends, may appropriately be introduced by the following passages from "The Book of Extracts of London Yearly Meeting."

"By the term discipline we understand all those arrangements and regulations which are instituted for the civil and religious benefit of a Christian church: the meetings of Discipline are, of course, for carrying these objects into effect. Their design was said by George Fox, to be—the promotion of charity and piety. It cannot be said that any system of discipline formed a part of the original compact of the society. There was not, indeed, to human appearance, anything systematic in its formation. It was an association of persons who were earnestly seeking, yea, panting after the saving knowledge of Divine Truth. They were men of prayer, and diligent searchers of the Holy Scriptures: unable to find true rest in the various systems, which in that day divided the Christian world, they believed that they found the truth in a more full reception of Christ, not only as the living and ever-present Head of the church in its aggregate capacity, but also as the light and life,—the spiritual ruler, teacher, and friend of every individual member." . . . . "As these views struck at the very root of that great corruption in the Christian church, by which one man's performances on behalf of others had been made essential to public worship, and on which hang all the load of ecclesiastical domination and the trade in holy things, so it necessarily separated those who had, as they believed, found the liberty of the gospel, from those who still adhered with pious regard, or a more ignorant and selfish attachment, to that system which was upheld by the existing churches of the land.

"Being thus separated from others, and many being every day added to the church, there arose, of course, peculiar duties of the associated persons towards each other. Christianity has ever been a powerful, active, and beneficent principle. Those who truly receive it, no more 'live unto themselves,' and this feature and fruit of genuine Christianity was strikingly exhibited in the conduct of the early Friends. No sooner were a few persons connected together in the new bond of religious fellowship, than they were engaged to admonish, encourage, and in spiritual as well as temporal matters to watch over and help one another in love.

"The members who lived near to each other, and who met together for religious worship, immediately formed, from the very law of their union, a Christian family or little church, each member was at liberty to exercise the gift bestowed upon him, in that beautiful harmony and subjection which belong to the several parts of a living body, from the analogy of which the Apostle Paul draws so striking a description of the true church; ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." . . . .

"Thus then we believe it may be safely asserted, that there never was a period in the society when those who agreed in religious principles were wholly independent of each other, or in which that order and subjection which may be said to constitute discipline did not exist. But as the number of members increased, those mutual helps and guards which had been, in

great measure, spontaneously afforded, were found to require some regular arrangements for the preservation of order in the church.

"The history of these proceedings affords no small evidence that the spirit of a sound mind influenced the body in its earliest periods. Contending as they did for so large a measure of individual spiritual liberty, and placing the authority of man in spiritual matters, in a position so subordinate to that of the one great Head of the church, they nevertheless recognized the importance and necessity of arrangements, and of human instrumentality, under the direction of the spirit of Christ; and they were led to establish a system of order, at once so simple and efficient, that notwithstanding the varying circumstances of the society, and the power of every annual meeting to alter it, it has been found in its main features, adapted to those changes, and it remains to this day essentially the same as it was within forty years of the rise of the society. Previously, however, to the establishment of that regular system of discipline, and of that mode of representation in the meetings for conducting it which now exist, there had been many General Meetings held in different parts of the nation, for the purpose of providing for the various exigencies of the society." *

The first convincement under the ministry of George Fox took place between the years 1644 and 1648, and meetings for worship were established in Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire: but the most remarkable accession of members was about the years 1651, '52, and '53, in Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Lancashire, Durham, Cumberland, and Northumberland. The first meetings of Friends held in London and its vicinity, were in 1654; and the same year their principles were spread in Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. In 1655, many ministers went beyond sea; and in 1656, some proselytes were made in the American provinces, and other places.†

It is stated, in the Journal of George Fox, that some meetings for discipline were settled in the north of England as early as the year 1653. One of these was a monthly meeting at Bishoprick, in the county of Durham. A document relating to this meeting has recently been discovered among the Swarthmore manuscripts, which is signed by 16 Friends, and endorsed by George Fox.

"This paper declares the object of their religious union to be, that every one should bear his burden, the strong with the weak, that the weak be not oppressed above his strength, but all drawing on, hand in hand, that the weak and the tired may be refreshed, and so all become a joint witness to the everlasting truth in word and conversation." ‡

A General Meeting was held at Balby, near Doncaster, in Yorkshire, in the year 1656, from which a number of directions and advices were issued, addressed "To the Brethren in the North." This document

* Friends' Library, I. 114.

† George Fox's Journal, II. 442.

‡ Bowden's History of Friends, I. 209.

refers to most of the points which now form the chief subjects of our discipline.

Another General Meeting was held at Scale-House, near Skipton, in Yorkshire, in the year 1658.

George Fox mentions in his Journal a General Meeting he attended at Skipton, in the year 1660, where Friends were met "out of many counties, concerning the affairs of the church. This meeting," he says, "had stood several years."

In the same year he attended a great meeting at Balby, in Yorkshire, concerning which he says; "Our Yearly Meeting at that time was held in a great orchard at John Killam's, where it was supposed some thousands of people and Friends were gathered together."

The Yearly Meeting at Balby was first established in 1658; and after being held there three years, was removed to London in 1661.*

"Next to General Meetings, we must mention the establishment of Quarterly Meetings, which were constituted of Friends deputed by the several meetings within a county. These meetings, in several of the counties at least, had existed prior to the establishment of Monthly Meetings, and they appear to have much the same office in the body, as the Monthly Meetings now have amongst us." * * *

"We now proceed to notice the more regular and systematic establishment of Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, and of the Yearly Meeting."

"Under the date of 1666, George Fox says in his journal, 'Then was I moved of the Lord to recommend the setting up of five Monthly Meetings of men and women Friends in the city [of London], besides the women's meetings and the Quarterly Meetings, to take care of God's glory, and to admonish and exhort such as walked disorderly and carelessly, and not according to truth. For whereas Friends had had only Quarterly Meetings, now truth was spread, and Friends were grown more numerous, I was moved to recommend the setting up of Monthly Meetings throughout the nation.' In 1667, he laboured most diligently in this service, under much bodily weakness from his long confinements in cold and damp prisons. In 1668, he thus writes concerning this service: 'The men's Monthly Meetings were settled through the nation. The Quarterly Meetings were generally settled before. I wrote also into Ireland, Scotland, Holland, Barbadoes, and several parts of America, advising Friends to settle their men's Monthly Meetings in those counties, for they had their Quarterly Meetings before.'"

"The Quarterly Meetings from this time, received reports of the state of society from the Monthly Meetings, and gave such advice and decisions as they thought right; but there was not until some years after this period, a general Yearly Meeting in which all the Quarterly Meetings were represented." †

It has been already stated that the General or Yearly Meeting which had met for three years at Balby, in Yorkshire, was removed to London in 1661; and there is reason to believe it continued to be held in that city until 1673, when a Yearly Meeting, in which the Quarterly meet-

* Letter of George Fox, quoted in Bowden's Hist.

† London Book of Extracts, Friends' Lib. I. 116.

ings were represented, met for the first time; in which it was concluded that the General Meeting as it had before existed, "be discontinued till Friends in God's wisdom shall see a further occasion;" and it was likewise agreed that the General Meeting of Friends who labour in the work of the ministry, do continue as formerly appointed.*

The establishment of Friends' meetings for discipline in the British American provinces was nearly coeval with their institution in the mother country. The Friends that came earliest to this continent on a religious mission, were Mary Fisher and Ann Austin, who arrived in Boston in 1656, and were immediately banished to Barbadoes on account of their religious principles. Two days after their expulsion, eight other Friends arrived from England on the same errand, who were also banished, after being imprisoned. Six of them returned the next year, accompanied by five others, in a small vessel called the "Woodhouse," owned and commanded by Robert Fowler, who was also a ministering Friend. Part of this company landed at New Amsterdam (now New York), and the others proceeded in the vessel to Providence, whence they travelled into various places, preaching the gospel.

Very soon after the arrival of these gospel messengers, meetings for worship were established, and regularly kept up, at Providence and Rhode Island. The principles of Friends were also embraced by many in Massachusetts, notwithstanding the violent measures adopted to arrest their progress. In the year 1660, Monthly Meetings had been established at Sandwich, Scituate, and Duxbury.† In 1671, John Burnyeat attended the Yearly Meeting in Rhode Island, "which," he says, "begins the 9th of the 4th month, every year, and is a General Meeting once a year for all Friends in New England."‡ He had just before attended the Half-year's Meeting at Oyster Bay, on Long Island, from which it appears that the principles of Friends had been embraced by many within the province of New York.

In 1672, a General Meeting of Friends was held at West River, in Maryland, and another at the Cliffs, in the same province; both of which were attended by George Fox, as related in his Life. In the same year, William Edmundson, being in Virginia, induced the Friends there to hold a meeting for discipline, and soon after George Fox attended similar meetings in that province.

At this period there were but few Friends in North Carolina, and their settlements in New Jersey and Pennsylvania had not been commenced.

The meetings for discipline, to which reference has been made, were,

* Friends' Library, I. 117.

† John Burnyeat's Journal, 40.

† Bowden's History, I. 153-4.

at their first institution, conducted by men; but it was not long before women were invited to come forward and take an active share in the concerns of the Society. One of the most remarkable features in the religious economy established among Friends, is its tendency to elevate woman to that rank in society for which she was evidently designed. Having acknowledged her equality with man, in the exercise of the gospel ministry, they were led to believe that she was also endowed with qualifications for usefulness in the government of the church, which ought not to be neglected.

"George Fox was the instrument by whom this salutary change was introduced, being, as he says, 'moved of the Lord to recommend women's meetings for the benefit of the church of Christ.' 'That faithful women, called to the belief of the truth, made partakers of the same precious faith, and heirs of the same everlasting gospel of life and salvation as the men are, might in like manner come into the possession and practice of the gospel order, and therein be meet helps unto the men in the restoration, in the service of truth, in the affairs of the church, as they are outwardly in civil or temporal things. That so all the family of God, women as well as men, might know, possess, perform, and discharge their offices and services in the house of God, whereby the poor might be the better taken care of; the younger sort instructed, informed, and taught in the way of God; the loose and disorderly reproved and admonished in the fear of the Lord; the clearness of persons proposing marriage more closely and strictly inquired into in the wisdom of God; and all the members of the spiritual body, the church, might wateh over and be helpful to each other in love.'"*

For many years after the rise of the Society, the persecution to which Friends were subjected in England, and most of her American colonies, rendered it necessary for some of the members frequently to wait upon persons in authority, on behalf of their suffering brethren and sisters, as well as to visit the prisons to afford them assistance. These duties, and others pertaining to the general interests of the Society, were, in the year 1675, committed to the care of men appointed by the Quarterly Meetings, and the body thus constituted, which met at stated periods, was called the Meeting for Sufferings.

This meeting is still continued, and is understood to represent the Yearly Meeting of London during its recess. The Yearly Meetings of Friends on the American continent, which are all independent of each other, and of the London Yearly Meeting, have each a representative committee, called a Meeting for Sufferings, to which is committed the care of all property belonging to the body, the revision and publication of books relating to Friends' principles, and, in general, to represent the Yearly Meeting, and appear on its behalf in all cases where the cause of truth, or the interest or reputation of the Society, may render it needful.

---

* Journal, II. 173.

MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

The meetings for discipline in the Society of Friends are called Preparative, Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly; the former being subordinate to the latter in the order here indicated. In all these meetings, except those composed of ministers and elders, every member not under dealings for a breach of discipline, is at liberty to sit and participate. The men and women meet in separate apartments, and are co-ordinate branches of the same meeting, each having a clerk of its own, but in some cases they appoint joint committees to prepare business, in which both branches are interested. The clerks are nominated by committees, and after consideration, appointed by the meeting. It is the duty of the clerk to gather the sense or judgment of the members present, and to record their decisions on such questions as may come before them.

Monthly meetings may be considered the executive organs of the Society, being intrusted with the power of receiving or disowning members, granting or accepting certificates of removal, directing and recording the solemnization of marriages, keeping a register of births and deaths, providing for the support of the poor and the education of their children, inquiring at stated periods into the condition of the society, and forwarding an account of the same to the Quarterly Meeting.

Several monthly meetings, generally contiguous to each other, form a Quarterly Meeting, and all the quarterly meetings, within certain limits, form a Yearly Meeting. Appeals from a Monthly Meeting may be taken to the Quarterly Meeting, and thence to the Yearly Meeting, which exercises a general supervision over all the meetings within its limits, and issues advices in relation to the state of the society and the support of its testimonies.

"In these solemn assemblies," says William Penn, "no one presides among them after the manner of the assemblies of other people, Christ only being their president, as he is pleased to appear in life and wisdom in any one or more of them, to whom, whatever be their capacity or degree, the rest adhere with a firm unity, not of authority, but conviction; which is the Divine authority and way of Christ's power and spirit in his people; making good his blessed promise that 'He would be in the midst of his, where and whenever they were met together in his name, even to the end of the world.'" *

It is obvious that a church thus constituted cannot act upon the principle of political bodies, where the majority governs; and it is still more objectionable for a minority to assume the right to govern. The only way to preserve "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," is for every member in such meetings to draw nigh to the Fountain of light and life, in order to "ask wisdom of God, who giveth to all men

* Preface to George Fox's Journal.

liberally and upbraideth not." While waiting upon Him in this frame of mind, each member is at liberty, under a sense of duty, to express his views with meekness, and if they proceed from the pure teachings of the Spirit of Truth, they will meet the witness for truth in other minds, and being responded to, will prevail over the meeting. It sometimes occurs that one of the younger members, being unbiassed and wholly resigned to follow his impressions of duty, becomes the instrument to point out the right course, which, being acceded to by others, is adopted by the meeting; but in most cases the older and more experienced members are expected to take the lead in all matters of importance.

Although there may, at first, be some diversity of sentiment, it seldom happens that a meeting where Divine love prevails, is long in doubt concerning any matter that is necessary to be decided. A meeting may be thrown into confusion by entering into the discussion of questions with which it has no proper concern, in which case, stepping out of its province, it has no right to expect Divine guidance. If a considerable degree of unanimity cannot be attained, it is best not to insist upon a decision, but rather to wait and adjourn from time to time, or dismiss the question.

When discipline cannot be exercised with good feelings, and tolerable unanimity, it is better to stand still; for if unity and love do not prevail, it is an evidence that the spirit of Christ does not sanction our proceedings, and, like the Israelites of old, we should be careful not to move forward so long as "the cloud rests upon the tabernacle, "whether it be two days, or a month, or a year."*

In every Monthly Meeting of Friends, two or more persons of each sex are appointed as overseers, whose duty is—

"To exercise a vigilant and tender care over their fellow-members, that if anything repugnant to the harmony and good order of the Society appears amongst them, it may be timely attended to. And to prevent the introduction of all unnecessary and premature complaints into meetings of business, it is understood that if any member shall have cause of complaint against another, it be mentioned to the overseers, who are to see that the party complained of has been treated with according to gospel order previously to the case being reported to the Preparative or Monthly Meeting. And it is desired that in treating with any, it be done in meekness and love, patiently endeavouring to instruct and advise them, which, if ineffectual, the Preparative Meeting should be informed thereof, that, if needful, the case may be laid before the Monthly Meeting, of which notice should be given to the party when it can conveniently be done."†

To the meetings for discipline among Friends, none but their own members are admitted, unless by application to the meeting, special

* Num. ix. 22.

† Book of Discipline, Balt. Y. M.

permission is obtained for the attendence of some who are convinced of their principles. This regulation having been censured by some persons without due consideration. the following reasons for it are adduced, as being in my view conclusive.

First. A part of the business of meetings for discipline is to deal with offenders, and it is obviously improper and uncharitable to expose to the public view, the weaknesses or faults of our brethren and sisters until every effort is made to reclaim them.

Secondly. The presence of spectators would deter some members from the free expression of their sentiments, and thus by obstructing their services, would prevent their growth in religious experience and usefulness.

Thirdly. The Meeting Houses, especially at the times of Quarterly and Yearly Meeting, are in some places, filled with members, whom it would be obviously improper to exclude, or incommode by the admission of persons not concerned in the business of the meeting.

Fourthly. The Society of Friends considers all its members, as constituting one family, or "household of faith;" and it would be as unreasonable for the public to expect admittance to its deliberations, concerning its own affairs, as for strangers to obtrude into the domestic arrangements of a private family.

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

In meetings for public worship, the preservation of order is placed under the care of ministers and elders, who are also expected to intimate the time when the congregation shall disperse. Any members, male or female, who may feel a persuasion of duty to address the meeting by way of exhortation, or to appear in public prayer, are at liberty to do so. Should their offerings in this way be acceptable, and edifying to the meeting, the elders, if needful, may encourage them to attend to their convictions of duty; but if their communications become burdensome to the meeting, and are believed to be without the life and authority of the gospel, the elders are authorised to give such counsel or admonition, as the case requires. It is obviously improper, that an individual whose services are not edifying, but hurtful to the meeting, should be permitted long to continue a practice which frustrates the very object of assembling for divine worship.

In the exercise of this authority by the elders, great tenderness and caution should be observed, lest they discourage some that are really called to the ministry, and who require only the affectionate and judicious counsel of their friends. The advice of George Fox on this head is wise and salutary.

In an epistle to Friends, he says, "All my dear friends in the noble seed of God, who have known his power, life and presence among you, let it be your joy to hear or see the springs of life break forth in any; through which ye have all unity in the same feeling, life and power. And above all things take heed of judging any one openly in your meetings, except they be openly prophane or rebellious." . . . . "But such as are tender, if they should be moved to bubble forth a few words, and speak in the Seed and Lamb's power, suffer and bear that." . . . . "And if they should go beyond their measure, bear it in the meeting for peace and order's sake, and that the spirits of the world be not moved against you. But when the meeting is done, if any be moved to speak to them, between you and them, one or two of you that feel it in the life, do it in the love and wisdom that is pure and gentle from above, for love is that which edifies, bears all things, suffers long, and fulfils the law." *

In another epistle, he says, "Friends, do not judge one another in meetings, ye that do minister in the meetings; for your so doing hath hurt the people, both within and without, and yourselves under their judgment ye have brought. And your judging one another in the meetings hath emboldened others to quarrel, and judge you also in the meetings. And this hath been all out of order, and the church order also. Now if ye have any thing to say to any, stay till the meeting be done, and then speak to them in private between yourselves, and do not lay open one another's weakness; for that is weakness and not wisdom to do so. For your judging one another in meetings hath almost destroyed some Friends, and distracted them. And this is for want of love that beareth all things; and therefore let it be amended." †

Again, he writes, "Friends, be careful how you set your feet among the tender plants, that are springing up out of God's earth, lest ye tread upon them, hurt them, bruise them, or crush them in God's vineyard." ‡

MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

In addition to the meetings for worship and church government already named, there are others, composed exclusively of ministers and elders, which have no control over the other members, and no right to meddle with changes of discipline. Their objects are to investigate their own spiritual condition, and to encourage one another to love and good works. When any Friend has frequently appeared in the public ministry, the Preparative Meeting of ministers and elders, after allowing sufficient time for a judgment to be formed, may take the subject under consideration, and if they believe a gift in the ministry has been conferred, the case is reported to the Monthly Meeting for discipline. If that meeting, in both its branches, men's and women's, concur in the recommendation, a minute to that effect is forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting of ministers and elders, and if there confirmed, the person so recommended stands as an acknowledged minister of the Society.

A minister who has a prospect of travelling in the service of the

---

* Journal, I. 289, 90. † Works, Vol. VII. 114. ‡ Journal, I. 333.

gospel, makes it known to the Monthly Meeting, where, after due deliberation, if approved, a certificate or minute of concurrence is granted, recommending him or her to the care and attention of Friends. In cases where extensive services are in view, the Quarterly Meeting is also consulted, and even the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, when the prospect extends beyond sea. A companion for the journey is generally found, and, in case of need, means are supplied to defray the expenses. This, however, is seldom requisite, as ministers among Friends are unwilling to receive pecuniary assistance, if they can possibly avoid it.

The benefits to be derived from this care over ministers, and the acknowledgment of their gifts, are obvious; but having, of late years, been called in question by some persons, may be briefly noticed.

First. It is found that some who think themselves required to appear as ministers, are not qualified to speak to "edification or comfort," and it is far better that such cases should be under the care of a few judicious elders, than be left with the meeting at large. In almost every meeting, there are some weak or inexperienced members, who are liable to be carried away by "every wind of doctrine," and there are others who pay more regard to the manner and diction of ministers, than to the matter delivered. Such persons, if they undertake to become judges of the ministry, form erroneous conclusions, and parties being formed in the meeting, the peace and welfare of the body are impaired.

Secondly. In order that ministers, when properly called and qualified, may be encouraged to occupy the gifts intrusted to them, and that when they travel abroad in the service of the gospel, they may be recognized by other branches of the Society, where they are personally strangers, it has been found best that the meeting to which they belong should acknowledge their gifts, after a sufficient time has been allowed to form a correct judgment.

Thirdly. This acknowledgment or recommendation of a minister confers no pre-eminence that should elevate him in his own esteem, or excite the jealousy of others; for it was said to the disciples, "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." So far from the meeting assuming the power to give a call to the ministry, the very act of acknowledging the gift conferred by the Head of the church, is a renunciation of all such power.

Fourthly. The appointment of elders being intrusted to the Monthly Meeting, all members who are qualified may be considered eligible to the station, and therefore it is not liable to the charge of creating a caste in the Society. It is only assigning specific duties to those who are considered qualified for their performance, and it appears to be warranted by the practice of the primitive Christian church.

It is the duty of elders to watch, with parental care, over the whole flock, extending a hand of help and a word of encouragement wherever it is needed. They are not only to sit with ministers, but to endeavour to sympathize with them in their religious exercises, and when they perceive that a minister, through unwatchfulness, or a desire of applause, runs into an excess of words, without the life and power of the gospel, or even if he fall into a habit of delivery unsuitable to the dignity of the subject, it is their duty, in a kind and affectionate manner, to extend suitable counsel. This may also be done by other members of the Society, who may feel it their duty; but there is an obvious propriety in this service being committed to discreet, experienced minds, such as elders ought to be, for should it become a subject of general remark, the minister's usefulness would be impaired, his feelings might be wounded, and the harmony of the society endangered. Like all other institutions, the eldership is liable to abuse, when intrusted to improper hands, and it has perhaps in some cases been made an engine of oppression; but the same may be said of the ministry itself, which, although a great blessing when preserved in purity, becomes the most terrible of all scourges when it falls into the hands of a mercenary or bigoted priesthood.

MEMBERSHIP.

Monthly Meetings are authorised by the discipline to admit into membership those who are convinced of the principles of Friends, after having appointed a committee to confer with them concerning the motives of their application, and to inquire into their moral characters.

The greater part of the society, however, is composed of those who are members by birthright; and this regulation having been much censured by some, appears to demand an attentive examination. The chief grounds of objection are, that birthright membership, even when followed by a guarded and religious education, does not confer grace, and cannot of itself make any one a member of the true church of Christ. And moreover, that persons who become in this way members of a religious society, may rely upon it to their own injury, like those Jews who said, "have we not Abraham for our father?" Thus, it is asserted, many will grow up to be merely moral men and women, without vital religion, "having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof;" and being employed in the administration of the discipline, they will introduce into the church a state of lifeless formality.

It must be admitted that these objections are not without weight, but I think they are over-balanced by the following considerations.

First. Although a birthright in a religious society cannot confer

grace, yet we believe children are born in a state of innocence; and if they die in this state, they will be received into the mansions of bliss, agreeably to the declaration of the blessed Jesus, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." If they are fit for heaven, are they not worthy to be considered members of the church?

Secondly. Under the Mosaic law, the children of Israelites inherited the religious privileges of their parents, receiving in their flesh the seal of the covenant; and likewise in nearly all denominations of christians, the children of members are baptized by sprinkling, to indicate their initiation into the visible church, and their acceptance of salvation through Christ.

Now it is evident that neither the Jewish rite, nor the baptismal ceremony, can of itself confer the gift of Divine grace, nor secure a holy life. They are, at best, only visible signs, expressive of an invisible grace, which, according to the doctrines of Friends, is offered to the acceptance of all, for "the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Therefore, in classing as members all the children of members, and in rejecting the ceremony of water-baptism, the society acts consistently with its principles.

The Jewish custom of birth-right membership, was evidently retained in the primitive christian church, for the apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, concerning christians married to unbelievers, "The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."*

Thirdly. When we consider the close affinity between parents and their offspring, and that children inherit not only the condition in life, but often the mental and physical peculiarities of their parents, and when we reflect, moreover, that the training given in infancy has a decided and lasting influence upon human character, it is abundantly manifest, that in a great majority of cases, the children of pious and judicious parents may be so educated, as to preserve them from the contaminating influence of the world, and to cherish in their hearts the principles of righteousness. The care extended by the Society of Friends over its junior members, and the consciousness they feel that they are entitled to the privileges, and amenable to the rules, of the discipline, have a most salutary influence upon their characters.

MARRIAGE.

As early as the year 1653, being several years prior to the general establishment of meetings for discipline among Friends, George Fox

*1 Cor. vii. 14.

issued advices in relation to marriage. Subsequently, he addressed to the meetings of Friends, several epistles in which he designated the manner to be observed in its solemnization.

"The right joining in marriage is the work of the Lord only, and not the priests or magistrates; for it is God's ordinance, and not man's. And, therefore, Friends cannot consent that they should join them together. For we marry none—it is the Lord's work, and we are but witnesses. But yet if a Friend, through tenderness, have a desire that the magistrate should know it, (after the marriage is performed in a public meeting of Friends and others, according to the holy order and practice of Friends in truth throughout the world, and according to the manner of the holy men and women of God of old,) he may go and carry a copy of the certificate to the magistrate; Friends are left to their freedom herein. But for priests or magistrates to marry or join any in that relation, it is not according to the scripture; and our testimony and practice hath been always against it. It was God's work before the fall, and it is God's work only in the restoration." *

In order to avoid all just cause of offence, a notice of the proposed marriage was twice published in meetings for worship, or some other place of public resort, and care was taken to inquire into the clearness of the parties from other similar engagements. When widows were about to be married, inquiry was made whether the children of a former husband, if any, had their legal rights properly secured. The solemnization of the marriage took place in a meeting for divine worship; the parties taking each other by the hand and promising with divine assistance, to be loving and faithful, until death should separate them; and then they signed a certificate, stating the engagement, and manner of proceeding; which certificate was also attested by the signatures of many others, who had witnessed the ceremony.

The wisdom of these precautions soon became apparent, for the clergy of the Anglican Church claimed the exclusive privilege to join people in marriage; which pretension being sanctioned by law, and rendered lucrative,—caused the marriages of Friends to be called in question by some. At length a case occurred, as related in the Life of George Fox, of a Friend's marriage being brought before a legal tribunal, when, after a full investigation, its legality was clearly established.

BURIALS.

The same simplicity, or freedom from ceremony, which characterized the meetings and marriages of the primitive Friends, was observed at the interment of their dead. The corpse was laid in a plain coffin without any covering or furniture upon it. At the grave, a solemn pause was observed, to afford time for serious reflection, as well as an opportunity for any who might be impelled by a sense of duty to offer a word of

* George Fox's Works, VII. 336.

exhortation. No habits of mourning were worn, nor were any monuments with inscriptions of a eulogistic character placed over the grave.

CHARITY AND CARE OE THE POOR.

As, in the primitive christian church, the care of widows and orphans, and the assistance of the poor, claimed the early attention of the disciples, so, at the rise of the Society of Friends, these were among the first objects in the administration of their discipline.

They were not willing that their poor should be dependent on the parish for support, but funds for their relief were raised by voluntary subscription among the members; nor were they unmindful of the duty that devolves upon all to contribute, according to their means, in works of general charity. The following extract from the Journal of George Fox illustrates their manner of proceeding. After speaking of the General Meeting at Skipton, in the year 1660, he says:—

"This meeting had stood several years, and divers justices and captains had come to break it up; but when they understood the business Friends met about, and saw Friends' books, and accounts of collections for relief of the poor, how we took care one county to help another, and to help our Friends beyond the sea, and provide for our poor, that none of them should be chargeable to their parishes, &c., the justices and officers confessed that we did their work, and would pass away peaceably and lovingly, commending Friends' practice. Sometimes there would come two hundred of the poor of other people, and wait till the meeting was done, (for all the country knew we met about the poor,) and after the meeting Friends would send to the bakers for bread, and give every one of those poor people a loaf, how many soever there were of them, for we were taught 'to do good unto all, though especially to the household of faith.'"

The epistles of George Fox abound with exhortations to liberality in supplying the wants of the poor, administering to the relief of prisoners, and providing for the support of widows and orphans.

The discipline of the Society requires "that the condition of its members, who are in indigent circumstances, be duly inspected, in order that advice and relief may be seasonably extended, and assistance afforded to them in such business as they are capable of. To defray the expenses which their support and the education of their children will necessarily occasion, it is recommended to each Monthly or Preparative Meeting of men and women Friends, to be liberal in subscriptions for raising and continuing funds for these purposes. And in the exercise of this benevolent care, it is desired that we may always guard against unnecessarily exposing the names or situation of our fellow-members."*

TRADE AND BUSINESS.

So strong was the popular prejudice against the Society of Friends at its first rise, that many refused to deal with them. It was not long,

* Discipline Balt. Yearly Meeting.

however, before their probity and punctuality became so extensively known, as to gain them general favour. The solicitude of George Fox lest they should be drawn away by the cares and temptations of business, is thus expressed in his epistles:

"At first you know that many could not take so much money in your trade as to buy bread with—all people stood aloof from you when you stood upright and gave them the plain language, and were at a word [in your dealings]; but now that through this you are come to answer that of God in all, they say they will trust you before their own people, knowing you will not wrong nor oppress them. And the cry now is, where is there a Quaker of such or such a trade? O, therefore, Friends, who have purchased this through great sufferings, lose not this great favour which God hath given unto you, but answer the witness of God in every man which witnesseth your faithfulness, that they may glorify your Father on your behalf. All Friends everywhere, that are shopkeepers or merchants, or factors, or any other trade, keep low in the power of God, and do not go beyond your capacity, nor reach after things more than ye can justly perform, and answer all men; but in all your places be just and true, that ye may answer all within and without [the Society], and truth and justice in your returns; and keep your words. So say, and so do, in all your tradings, which is the royal law of liberty, else ye are a dishonour to Christianity.

"Be not cumbered nor surfeited with the riches of this world, nor bound nor straitened with them, but be loose and free from them, and married to the Lord." *

EDUCATION.

The education of children so as to preserve the purity of their morals, and to promote practical righteousness, was, in the view of George Fox, an object of primary importance.

The following extracts are from his epistles to Friends:

"All Friends, train up your children in the fear of God; and as they are capable, they may be instructed and kept employed in some lawful calling; that they may be diligent, serving the Lord in the things that are good; that none may live idle and be destroyers of the creation, and thereby become burdensome to others, and to the just [witness] in themselves." . . . . "It is desired that all Friends who have children, families and servants, may train them up in the pure and unspotted religion, and in the nurture and fear of God; and that frequently they read the Holy Scriptures, which is much better than to be gadding abroad. And exhort and admonish them that every family apart may serve and worship the Lord as well as in public." . . . .

But although he considered their moral and religious education of the first importance, he was not indifferent to their progress in useful literature and science.

He says in his Journal, under date 1667, "I advised the setting up of a school [at Waltham] for teaching boys, and also a women's school to be opened at Shackelwell, for instructing girls and young maidens

* Friends' Library, I. 131.

in whatsoever things were civil and useful in the creation." He also gave a piece of ground which he owned near Philadelphia, to be used as a botanical garden for "the lads and lasses of the city to walk in, and learn the habits and uses of the plants."*

SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES.

In order that all differences among members of the society might be settled amicably, and without resort to the legal tribunals, the following mode of proceeding was recommended by George Fox, and the substance of it ingrafted into the Discipline.

"If there happen any difference between Friend and Friend, let them speak to one another; and if they will not hear, let them take two or three of the meeting they belong to, that they may end it, if they can. And if they cannot end it, then it may be laid before the Monthly Meeting. And if it cannot be ended there, then it may be brought before the Quarterly Meeting, and there let it be put to half a dozen Friends, that they may end it and keep their meetings quiet. Or, they that are at difference may choose three Friends, and Friends may choose three more, and let them stand to their judgment."† . . . . "All that are concerned to end any difference, let them have but one ear to one party, and let them reserve the other ear for the other party, so that they may judge impartially, without affection or favour, or respect of persons."‡

The settlement of differences by arbitration has been found to succeed admirably well. It has been the means of avoiding the ruinous expenses of law-suits, and in most cases of averting the animosities that usually attend litigation. There is no doubt that the same principle might with great advantage be adopted in civil society, and the ends of justice, in most cases, more effectually promoted than by the present system of jurisprudence. Clarkson gives an account of an institution formed for this purpose, called "The Newcastle-upon-Tyne Association for general Arbitration," which was remarkably successful in settling differences among merchants and ship-owners. He says it was finally destroyed by its popularity, for so many persons were ambitious of the honour of becoming members of the committee, that some of inferior knowledge, judgment, and character, were too hastily admitted into it; which impaired the public confidence in its decisions, and led to its extinction.§

TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS.

One of the chief objects of christian discipline, is to endeavour to reclaim those who deviate from the principles of christianity.

---

* Evans's Memoir of George Fox. † George Fox's Works, VII. 339.

‡ Friends' Library, I. 135.

§ Portraiture of Quakerism, in Vol. II. ch. v.

The following advices on this subject, from the epistles of George Fox, show the manner and the spirit in which this important and delicate service should be conducted.

"Now concerning gospel order; though the doctrine of Jesus Christ requireth his people to admonish a brother or sister twice, before they tell the church, yet that limiteth none, so as that they shall use no longer forbearance before they tell the church, but that they shall not less than twice, admonish their brother or sister before they tell the church. And it is desired of all, that before they publicly complain, they wait in the power of God, to feel, if there is no more required of them to their brother or sister, before they expose him or her to the church; let this be weightly considered."

"And further, when the church is told, and the party admonished by the church again and again, and he or they remain still insensible and unreconciled, let not final judgment go forth against him or her, until every one of the meeting have cleared his or her conscience; that if anything be upon any, further to visit such transgressor, they may clear themselves, that if possible, the party may be reached and saved. And after all are clear of the blood of such an one, let the judgment of Friends in the power of God go forth against him or her; as moved for the Lord's honour and glory's sake, that no reproach may come or rest upon God's holy name, truth, and people.

"And all such as behold their brother or sister in a transgression, go not in a rough, light, or upbraiding spirit to reprove or admonish him or her; but in the power of the Lord, and spirit of the Lamb, and in the wisdom and love of the truth, which suffers thereby to admonish such an offender. So may the soul of such a brother or sister be seasonably and effectually reached unto and overcome, and they may have cause to bless the name of the Lord on their behalf, and so a blessing may be rewarded into the bosom of that faithful and tender brother or sister that so admonished them."

"And be it known unto all, that we cast out none from among us; for if they go from the life, and spirit and power, in which our unity is, they cast out themselves. And so it has been our way to admonish them, that they may come to the spirit and light of God, which they are gone from, and so come into the unity again. For our fellowship stands in the light that the world hates, and in the spirit which the world grieves, vexes and quenches; and if they will not hear our admonition as before, the light condemns them, and then goes the testimony of truth out against them.

"And no condemnation ought to go further than the transgression is known. And if he or she returns, and gives forth a paper of condemnation against him, or herself, (which is more desirable than that we should do it,) this is a testimony of his or her repentance and resurrection before God, his people, and the whole world; as David, when Nathan came to admonish him.

"And let no testimony by way of condemnation be given forth against any man or woman, whatever crime they commit before admonition, and until such times as they have had Gospel order according to Christ's doctrine." "That is, 'if thy brother offend thee, speak to him, betwixt thee and him; and if he will not hear, take two or three; if he will not hear two or three, then tell it to the church," &c.*

CONCLUSION.

This sketch of the origin and chief provisions of the Discipline of

* George Fox's Works, VII. 339–40.

Friends may, not inappropriately, be concluded by a few remarks on the benefit derived from that admirable code.

We have seen that many of its most important provisions were adopted at the recommendation of George Fox, soon after the rise of the society—that others were added as experience suggested their propriety — and that its arrangements, nearly as they now stand, were completed during the life of that eminent man, whom William Penn terms a "faithful servant and apostle" of the Most High.

In the Journal of George Fox, under date 1667, after mentioning the Monthly Meetings set up, and their care "to admonish and exhort such as did not walk as becomes the gospel," he adds; "And indeed, these meetings made a great reformation among the people, insomuch that the justices took notice of their usefulness."*

This sentiment is corroborated by other writers of that day, and fully sustained by the following passage from "Gough's History of the People called Quakers." Referring to the institution of the Discipline, he says—

"This economy hath ever since subsisted amongst this people, whereby the great ends of religious society, real devotion of heart towards God, a careful and circumspect conversation in righteousness and honesty amongst men, and the mutual edification of each other in love, have been materially promoted, and a people dispersed in sundry quarters of the world, rendered a compact body, engaged in a zealous and mutual concern for the promotion of peace and piety amongst themselves and mankind in general."†

It is observed by William Penn, in his "Account of the Rise and Progress of the People called Quakers," that they were careful in their discipline to "avoid two extremes, upon which many split, viz: persecution and libertinism." They denied the authority or necessity of a "coercive power to whip people into the temple."

"On the other hand, they equally dislike an independency in society; an unaccountableness in practice and conversation to the terms of their own communion, and to those that are the members of it. They distinguish between imposing any practice that immediately regards faith or worship, (which is never to be done, nor suffered, nor submitted unto,) and requiring Christian compliance with those methods that only respect church-business in its more civil part and concern, and that regard the discreet and orderly maintenance of the character of the society, as a sober and religious community. In short, what is for the promotion of holiness and charity, that men may practise what they profess, live up to their own principles, and not be at liberty to give the lie to their profession without rebuke. They compel none to them, but oblige those that are of them to walk suitably, or they are denied by them; that is all the mark they set upon them, and the power they exercise, or judge a Christian society can exercise upon those that are the members of it."‡

The rules and regulations of the discipline are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians — unchangeable. Any Yearly Meeting may

* Journal, II. 88.

† Gough, II. 165.

‡ Preface to Journal of George Fox, XXXII.

alter or repeal them, so far as relates to its own members. And moreover, any member is at liberty, in the Monthly Meeting to which he or she belongs, to propose a change of discipline, or any other measure pertaining to the concerns of the society. If the proposition meet the concurrence of that meeting, it may go forward to the Quarterly Meeting, and if there approved, it may be taken to the Yearly Meeting, where, if adopted, it becomes a rule of the society.

It is obvious, however, that no change of discipline should be made without due deliberation, and a persuasion in the minds of the members that it is consistent with the Divine will.

To show the estimate which some, who were not members of the Society of Friends, have placed upon the labours of George Fox in establishing the discipline, the following passages are quoted:

"There is no character in Christian history since the days of its divine Founder," says the "Annual Review and History of Literature," "more free from spot or stain than that of George Fox. It is no less absurd to pronounce him insane from his writings, than it would be to pronounce Cromwell a fool from his speeches.

"By their actions they are to be judged. No form of civil polity so unexceptionable in its means and end, so beautiful in all its parts, so perfect as a whole, has ever been imagined in philosophical romance or proposed in theory, as this man conceived, established, and reduced to practice." *

Clarkson, in his "Portraiture of Quakerism," says: "The discipline of Friends is the grand foundation-stone upon which their moral education is supported. It is the grand partition-wall between them and vice. If this part of the building were ever allowed to be undermined, the building would fall to pieces; and though the Quakers might still be known by their apparel and language, they would no longer be so remarkable as they are now generally confessed to be, for their moral character." †

* Friends' Library, I. 123. † Vol. I. p. 183.

THE END.

683

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2006

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 017 525 095 5